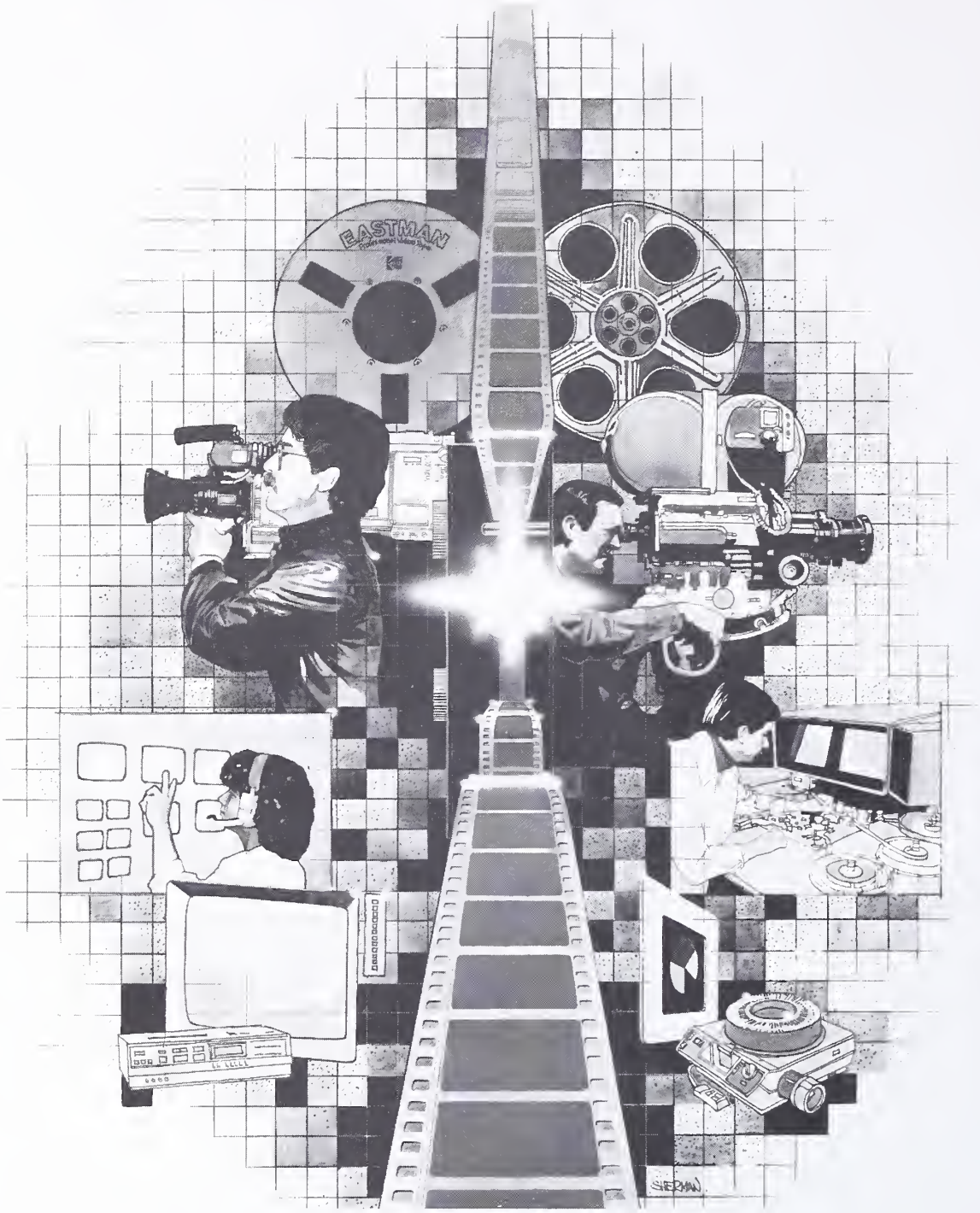
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COVER: The slickness of big-budget television is designed to mesmerize a mass audience. But what about media that aims to empower and enlighten rather than narcotize? In "All That Glitters..." video artist Sherry Millner insists that low-budget film and video don't require any apology. Her manifesto, first presented at ViewPoints: A Conference on Women, Culture, and Public Media, argues that the resourcefulness and focus required by limited budgets are effective tools in creating alternative media. Illustration: Sherry Millner.

RIGHTS AND WRONGS: LEARNING CHANNEL CONTRACTS

The Learning Channel cable programming service will launch the fourth part of its *Independents* program this April. Despite all the opportunities envisioned by producers when cable/satellite delivery systems were first introduced, *The Independents* is the only regular national fee–paying showcase to materialize. Since the Public Broadcasting Service remains open to relatively few independent producers, *The Independents*' existence, its continuity, and TLC's payment of $210 per minute make it all the more significant. Says Blaine Dunlap, whose *Sometimes I Run* was in the third TLC series, *Ordinary People*, "For all the great ecumenical discussions that independents have when they get together, there's nobody more efficient than some crapshooter with a big wad of money. [The Learning Channel] just gets stuff done: bang, bang, bang. They're really knocking [the series] out, and they're getting quality stuff. PBS would still be trying to figure out what to call it."

But there's trouble in paradise. When the contracts for the upcoming series, *Declarations of Independence*, arrived in the mail, a number of producers were miffed. "When you sign the contract," explains producer Louis Hock, "they are buying the thing for the Learning Channel—and it's nonexclusive. But [the contract] also gives them rights to distribute to other cable systems. And it also gives them the right to distribute to PBS. Which means it gives then the right to distribute to everybody—which was not the original sense I got from the Learning Channel." Anita Thatcher was particularly riled that PBS is once again getting free programming, and, while pleased with TLC's payment rate, she finds the giveaway to PBS demeaning to producers. "In the midst of something that was very wonderful and very appropriate and very forward–looking, to find something that is so backwards and so faulty in [the contract's] language was very upsetting."

Representatives of TLC, however, say they are trying to *help* independents by substantially increasing the visibility of *The Independents* through an alliance with local PBS stations. Reaching only seven million households, TLC is available to a relatively small audience. The contract, which asks for more rights than TLC has used to date or plans to use, would allow the channel to supplement its regular outlets via stations in such major markets as New York City, Washington, Miami, Detroit, and New Orleans.

For those aware of previous contract disputes with TLC, the situation seems like *deja vu*. Open–ended and ambiguous language, public television distribution rights, and lack of prior notice about the PBS clause were all issues that have come up in the past. While apparently none of this year's producers are going to withhold PBS rights, as some did in 1986, it is evident that the business relationship between TLC and independents has some wrinkles that need ironing out.



***Trick or Drink* is one of twelve independent programs showcased on the Learning Channel's *Ordinary People* series.**
Courtesy the Learning Channel

According to Stevenson Palfi, who has contracted with PBS, CBS Cable, and Britain's Channel Four in the past, TLC's contracts were "the worst I've ever seen." They were "ambiguous, misleading, and so general that your work could end up being used all different kinds of ways." TLC's 1986 contract for *Ordinary People*, like that for the first two series, said that TLC could use the program "in any manner, in any media, in any country." The grant of license appeared to be in perpetuity; educational institutions could record the series; TLC's editing rights were extensive; and payment was to occur after airing, rather than upon delivery of the work. The PBS provision was tucked under "Method of Payment," three–quarters of the way through the document. What particularly incensed a number of producers, though, was that they had no prior knowledge of TLC's intention to distribute to public television. According to Palfi, "[The series] was never advertised as such. Nobody ever said they would also distribute—for free—our programming to another market, which happens to be the biggest market in the country for our work, the biggest audience."

Palfi was the first of several producers whose work was slated for *Ordinary People* to contact TLC and dispute the contract's terms. At the time, his *Junebug Jabbo Jones* had been recently completed. PBS had expressed some interest, and Palfi was not about to lose a potential sale. Other producers who had not yet had a chance to market their work also balked. While TLC does not ask for exclusive rights, producers were concerned that PBS stations would.

Palfi, Dunlap, and Ralph Arlyck also contacted Lawrence Sapadin, the executive director of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers. Two years earlier when *The Independents* was getting off the ground, Sapadin, who served on an advisory committee, had been asked by the first series' producer Gerald O'Grady of Media Study/Buffalo to look over the original contract. Sapadin responded with a letter to O'Grady, outlining eight problem areas. None of these had been cleared up, however, in the 1986 contract. When Sapadin called TLC president, Robert Shuman, to discuss the *Ordinary People* contracts, Shuman said neither Sapadin's letter to O'Grady nor his concerns had been passed on to him or anyone else at TLC.

The upshot of these calls was a last–minute revision of the 1986 contract. PBS rights and after–market activities were deleted from all contracts. But not long after the revisions went out, an amendment was mailed to producers which, if signed, permitted broadcast by PBS stations over a three–month period. Of the 34 producers involved, "less than half a dozen," according to Shuman, withheld the PBS rights. *Ordinary People* will, therefore, be marketed to PBS stations as orginally planned (as were the two previous series, *Dis/patches* and *Agenda*), but with the necessary programs omitted.

This predominently positive response to the public broadcast option would seem to indicate that most producers did not share Palfi et al.'s concerns. Some, like Julie Akeret, were first–time producers and happy for the exposure. Others generally had works that were

odd lengths or are several years old and thus stood little chance of finding a PTV outlet on their own. And some of the programs had already gotten PTV airtime. For those producers, a combined cable/PBS venue seemed desirable, and $210 per minute for a "second life" acquisition was thought generous. As Melinda Ward, executive producer of *Declaration of Independence*, said, "If you're not simply talking principle, but are talking the reality of the marketplace in real dollars, very few people are going to miss out." Individual stations, where most sales of independently produced programs to public television occur, pay about $50 per minute—*if* they pay at all—and much of that income is absorbed by the promotion costs a producer is expected to cover.

But the point a number of producers are making is that if TLC is paying $210 for cable rights, then they should expect to pay an additional amount for the right to distribute to public television stations, particularly if the work is premiering on *The Independents*. As a retrospective series, *Declarations of Independence* contains almost no premieres, which is one reason why there are fewer problems with this round of contracts than with *Ordinary People*. Virgil Grillo, who has been closely involved with the series since its inception, explains that the concept of giving older work a second life was part of the rationale for *The Independents*. In approaching the MacArthur Foundation, the principal funder of the series, "The whole claim was that there's a tremendous depth, a legacy, a 25–year backlog of fabulous programming, some of which has been seen but never adequately presented." Grillo considers $210 a very fair rate for such work. "Problems have arisen with people who have brand new programs, who characterize this as yet another rip–off. I think that is extremely wrong–headed, and it's going to mess up a very good deal." Grillo fears that, if asked for additional money to accommodate premieres, MacArthur will back off, since it might appear that there isn't the great backlog of independent work that TLC originally claimed.

Shuman believes that the series "needs to be positioned, marketed, and promoted to develop that audience out there, so that at some time it's not just the MacArthur Foundation that's putting money into something like this, but Ikegami, Fuji, and Sony." Building alliances with PBS stations and unaffiliated cable systems, even if that means letting them "cherry–pick the channel," is critical to audience growth. Also, now that TLC has jumped from 10 to 20 hours per day, Shuman sees TLC's carriage potentially increasing from its current level of seven million homes to 20 million. "When an audience is out there, that's when these corporations and businesses are attracted."

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Most of the producers involved in *The Independents* believe TLC is well–intentioned and have made their complaints openly and optimistically. But some remain skeptical. Dunlap, for instance, sees TLC "playing by the same rules any commercial operation plays by." He thinks the contract's language is no accident. "I think they were seeing how far they could go. You don't know until you put your foot in the water how hot the water's going to be. They found out, and now they're recanting and backtracking."

Negotiations for *Ordinary People* resulted in several changes. Producers are now explicitly notified about TLC's intent to distribute to public television. Changes in the contracts include the deletion of the most objectionable phrase, "in any manner, in any media, in any country." In addition, the time frame for distribution rights has been more specifically defined, the educational recording provision dropped, and TLC's editing rights made contingent on written consent.

On the other hand, some controversial provisions were left intact—for example the timing of payment—or were only partially resolved—such as written consent to editing, which "may not be unreasonably withheld." Furthermore, under the "Grant of License" clause, piecemeal revisions have created contradictory language—"jibberish," in Sapadin's words. In fact, he suggested to Shuman that, after *Ordinary People*, a top–to–bottom rewrite of the contract is in order. And Shuman agrees. Why this did not happen prior to the fourth series is unclear. When questioned, Shuman replied, "[*Ordinary People* and *Declarations of Independence*] are under the same grant, and we're locked into the amount of money we had available for that series." Shuman promises a rewrite of the contract before the next round and says TLC will consider, among other things, different contracts for old and new work. Shuman is anxious to build alliances and trust among independent producers, since he hopes to show their work for years to come.

PATRICIA THOMSON

THE $100–MILLION TREASURE HUNT

In a speech on November 3 at the Public Broadcasting Service Program Fair, PBS president Bruce Christensen appealed to stations that are members of the Special Programming Consortium, to invest an additional $100–million in its National Program Service. "One hundred million dollars is the difference between good talent and great talent," said Christensen at the fair in Austin, Texas. It is the key, he maintained, to restoring public television's eroding claim to programming exclusivity. Without immediate attention and the money necesssary to produce, promote, and protect

new programs, argues Christensen, public television could find itself on the brink of mediocrity, as increasing numbers of "TV predators" snatch away its programs, its talents, and eventually, its audiences.

While affirming SPC's success, Christensen suggested specific areas of improvement. The primary role of the SPC, he reminded attendees, is to guarantee the continuation of public television staples. Christensen explained that the SPC has not been attentive to entirely new series because such attention is not its primary concern. But, he emphasized that if member stations want increased delivery of new programs, these stations must expend greater resources on nurturing new series from inception through maturity.

The responsibility of providing the extra $100–million lies in the hands of member stations, according to Christensen. "The $100–million bullet is one the stations will have to bite," he said. They must take action to supplement corporate underwriting and federal appropriation, funding sources that tend to be unreliable. Since $100–million comprises only one–tenth of the system's current revenue, Christensen argued that the reorganization of expenditures could be a source of the additional money.

Staff members of stations that were contacted appeared receptive to Christensen's proposal. George Miles, executive vice president and chief operating officer of WNET–New York, found the request reasonable. The goal of augmenting national programming funds by $100–million is both "practical and reachable," Miles agreed, adding that extra funding would only further assure that PTV stations have the best projects. There is no question that a consensus exists among member stations that alternative sources of funding must be sought. The question to ask about Christensen's alternative concerns the sacrifices that might be required. Peter McGhee, program manager for National Production at WBGH–Boston, pointed out that the reorganization of expenditures to create more program production funds could translate into reduced local programming or reduced funds for acquiring new syndications.

According to Christensen, the impetus behind the $100–million proposal stems from the conclusion reached by various managers, producers, state network chiefs, and market managers that national programming is in need of improvement by means of collaboration and internal financing. Whether or not this new mood of unity for reform will be reflected in deeds depends on Christensen's future success in encouraging concensus among PBS stations. According to McGhee, the proposed $100–million may or may not materialize in the next couple of years, depending on concrete plans to aggregate and disperse this money.

QUYNH THAI

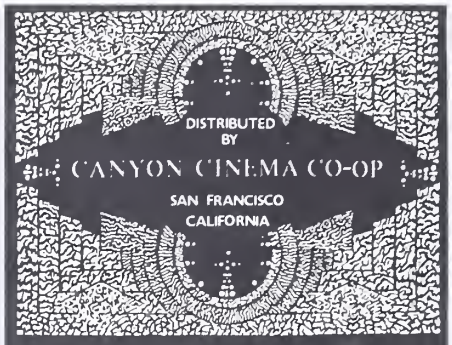
SEQUELS

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation has made good on the requests for proposals that were sent to a number of media arts centers in September 1986 ["The Big Mac," December 1986] by awarding 36 groups a total of $820,000, the largest chunk of new money given to the independent media field in a long while. Only a select number of organizations received the requests for proposals, and almost all those awarded grants appear on the National Endowment for the Arts' list of "designated media arts centers," leaving out in the cold some groups categorized as "national services," "expansion arts organizations," or those that have not received the NEA Media Program imprimatur. Ted Hearn, a spokesperson for MacArthur, told *The Independent* that the foundation had not yet decided whether such grants will be awarded in the future, although they remain interested in supporting independent media.

The 36 groups received grants ranging from $15,000 to $50,000. $15,000 grants: Asian Cinevision, Black Filmmaker Foundation, Carnegie Museum of Art, Center for Contemporary Arts of Santa Fe, Chicago Filmmakers, Film Forum, Global Village Video Resource Center, Image Film/Video, Institute of Contemporary Art, Locus Communications, Media Project, Neighborhood Film/Video Project, Pittsburgh Filmmakers, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, South Carolina Arts Commission, UCVideo, Utah Media Arts Center, Visual Communications, Walker Art Center, and Whitney Museum of American Art; $30,000 grants: Bay Area Video Coalition, Boston Film/Video Foundation, Capital Children's Museum, Center for New Television, Facets Multimedia, Long Beach Museum of Art Foundation, Museum of Modern Art, Rocky Mountain Film Center, UCLA Film and Television Archives; $50,000 grants: Downtown Community Television Center, Film Arts Foundation, Film in the Cities, Film/Video Arts, Pacific Film Archive.

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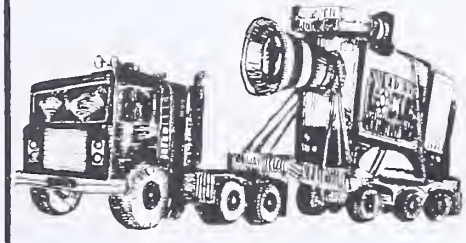


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AGAINST THE ODDS: AMERICAN INDIAN MEDIA INITIATIVES



The works of Native American videomakers, such as Victor Masayesva, Jr.'s tape *Itam Hakim, Hopiit*, opened the first Native American American Screening and Video Production Workshop.

Courtesy Museum of the American Indian

Charlayne Haynes

The high mortality rate for media centers in upstate New York and the lack of accessible models that encourage development has not daunted the spirit or determination of Native Americans who want to produce and distribute media in their own communities. One of the most active resources for Native American media is the Education Department of the Seneca Nation, located on the Cattaraugus Reservation in upstate New York. During the weekend of October 24–26, the Senecas hosted the first Native American Screening and Video Production Workshop, cosponsored by the Film and Video Center of New York City's Museum of the American Indian.

Home to the largest settlement of Senecas in the Northeast, the ambience of the Cattaragus Reservation reflects its locale, 75 miles from Buffalo, the nearest city. This quiet rural atmosphere was conducive to concentrated work and to creating a unified purpose among the diverse group of Indian producers and educators from Seneca, Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Tuscarora, and Cayuga Nations—the Iroquois Confederacy.

Also among the participants were media and cultural organizations from around the state, including the Gannagaro State Historic Site, the country's largest Native American museum and cultural center; Squeaky Wheel, the Buffalo–based collective of film and video producers; and organizers of Public Access: Report on the Involvement of Communities in Producing Alternative Television, better known as PARTICIPATE. I went as a representative of the Media Action Project, organized by the Film News Now Foundation and Third World Newsreel, a New York State initiative designed to increase the presence of people of color in video, radio, television, and audio arts. Our role as resource participants was to provide practical information for the workshop and to find out the concerns of Native American producers.

The weekend opened on Friday evening with a public screening of "welcome videos," programmed by Elizabeth Weatherford, the director of the annual Native American Film and Video Festival. The five samples of traditional documentary and experimental forms illustrated the range of work by Indian producers around the country. Most of these tapes expressed common themes of culture, family traditions, and survival. Older cinema verite–style educational pieces, such as the chronicle of planting traditions produced by the educational center of the Creek Nation, contrasted with the highly stylized work of Victor Masayesva, the highly respected Hopi photographer turned filmmaker, whose soundtracks are recorded only in the Hopi language. Masayesva portrays the drama of nature and silence in a striking way, using, for example, the intensity of lightening or images of the moon to evoke the stories told by Hopi elders. Acknowledging the diversity of Indian works, Joyce Gates, the pioneer videomaker, activist, and teacher at the Cattaraugus Center, stressed the need for community involvement, building on the curiosity about media production to challenge the fear of using technology.

Saturday's session was led by Karen Ranucci, videomaker and teacher at Downtown Community TV in New York City. She organized a simple but effective workshop, screening works–in–progress by about half a dozen conference participants. The tapes, in different stages of production, reflected various levels of skill. As resource people, we helped identify problem areas in each tape, suggesting practical solutions or alternatives to the producer.

The first of these presentations struck a familiar chord—the question of control. Peter Jemison, a painter and manager of the Gannagaro Historical Site, related a tragic tale of the production of a 30–minute video, ostensibly made to orient visitors to the site and to celebrate the Indian presence there since the seventeenth century. The players in the tale included a white anthropologist *cum* producer/director who had studied Indian artifacts but wanted desperately to direct; an advisory group composed of Native Americans who had no experience with production budgets, contracts, or organization; and a coproducing public television station that soon tired of the subsequent chaos.

Jemison, well–known in Indian media circles, was brought in on the project at the eleventh hour, when the anthropologist's failure to communicate with the Indian community had created an impasse in the project. At that point, Jemison contended, the video looked like "the worst *National Geographic* special imaginable." The workshop participants who viewed the tape concurred. They criticized its use of an intrusive narrator, which obliterated the real voices of the people, the images of historical artifacts presented randomly and without accurate explanation, and the use of confusing language.

Although it was too late to produce another tape because the site is scheduled to open this spring, Jemison received guidance on dealing with future projects, and most important, lessons on protecting one's work and the community's interests. Many of the participants echoed Jemison's frustration over the difficulty of maintaining editorial control over their projects. They stressed that long–term support and hands–on training would be the most effective antidote to the problem of control. The barriers that inhibit Indians on the road to self– definition are endemic to minority artists who challenge widespread cultural distortion and defamation.

Ranucci selected several of Saturday's tapes for the next day's intensive editing sessions. The workshop had identified several basic but critical areas in postproduction: knowing the audience and determining a major focus, purpose, and structure for the work. Some of the segments later shown startled the audience with their wit and promise, such as Joyce Gates' video promo-


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ting a celebrated Indian lacrosse team, or Brad Bonaparte's community profile of the Akwesasne Nation. Bonaparte, once a visual artist, is now a videomaker with the Travelling College of Akwesasne. He brought almost six hours of footage on political issues like environmental pollution and the impact of growing businesses such as Indian–owned construction and iron–working companies. Rodney Pierce, an Allegheny tribal councillor and one–man video operation, screened several of his unedited tapes. The most impressive was a document of the profitable Bingo boom, a successful Indian enterprise that attracts nearly 2,000 players every night.

Despite the lack of training and shortage of funds for educational media projects, the producers have certain advantages. Many are affiliated with tribal education departments that receive federal funding for state–of–the–art video equipment. Because of the fascination with seeing oneself on television, the hardware is in constant use, documenting Indian community life, enabling the education departments to raise additional money for equipment. The Cattaraugus Center alone bought $6,000 worth of new equipment last year—not a minor feat for an education program just testing the private funding waters. Another windfall came to Pierce when he accidently discovered a closet–full of video equipment at the Allegheny reservation. The treasure trove had apparently been purchased by a previous educational program, only to be forgotten. Pierce has used the equipment to nurture Project Resource, which assumed the urgent task of documenting the elders on tape for future generations.

However, equipment alone cannot create programs. Indian producers feel that, lacking training, they remain vulnerable. Geographically isolated from the other media organizations in upstate New York, they want to communicate with other producers. One potential vehicle is public access cable, an opportunity that can be facilitated with the help of the PARTICIPATE program. The Media Action Project will help link Indian producers to long– and short–term training services, public and private funding sources, and organizational assistance, and will organize another workshop, possibly at Akwesasne.

The consensus among the group was that Native American communities have history on their side. They have launched small–scale media productions through a grassroots foundation and can now build on their resources with careful planning and support generated by the conference. Plans are already being made for the next year's workshop on producing for cable. With this level of activity, these communities can galvanize new models that others can follow.

Charlayne Haynes is an arts and media producer who is currently director of the Media Action Project.

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SCREENINGS CENTRAL: THE 1986 INDEPENDENT FEATURE MARKET



Distributors and festival directors from all over the world had the opportunity to see Barbara Margolis' *Are We Winning the War Mommy?* at the Independent Feature Market.
Courtesy filmmaker

Berenice Reynaud

In the late seventies, a group of filmmakers led by independent producer Sandra Schulberg decided it was time they were recognized as a new movement. Deciding further that nobody could better serve their interests than themselves, they organized a retrospective of about 20 independent movies as a sidebar at the New York Film Festival. In time they discovered the necessity of creating their own structure. Such was the origin of the Independent Feature Project in New York City, whose major activity is sponsorship of the Independent Feature Market, now in its eighth year.

Held between October 1 and 11 (slightly overlapping the New York Film Festival press screenings) in the Department of Cultural Affairs building at 2 Columbus Circle, the Independent Feature Market 1986 presented 64 films—including shorts and works–in–progress shown at the video sidebar. The market should not be confused with a festival. Every filmmaker who pays the entry fee has the right to participate.* However, Sam Kitt, director of the market, specifies, "We're just not interested in showing exploitation material." Indeed, the market exists essentially to prove that "indies" can produce quality movies with a commercial potential.

For Kitt, the evolution of the IFM reflects recent developments of a certain form of independent cinema. "At the beginning of the eighties the term 'American Independent film' was coined, and it became a movement recognized by the press. *The Return of the Secaucus Seven* was the first of a wave of successful well–known independent films." These movies are distributed as "specialty films." i.e., in a more cautious, less spectacular, and less costly manner than commercial releases. They open in only one cinema per city, and the lab strikes only between 15 and 40 prints, while the major studios release hundreds of prints simultaneously.

Can the independents presented at the market expect to find a distribution deal? Kitt says: "I don't think a lot of deals are struck here. Contacts are made during the market that usually bear fruit over a period of time." Last year, five or six films presented at the market were released theatrically including Dan Bessie's *Hard Traveling*, Bill Sherwood's *Parting Glances*, Aviva Kempner and Josh Waletzky's *Partisans of Vilna*, and Manfred Kirchheimer's *We Were So Beloved*—and Kitt is "pretty sure" that they were discovered at the market. He adds that, following last year's market, British television's Channel 4 bought a half dozen films, and a few American independent films, including Mark Romanek's *Static*, were successfully released in England.

Some skeptical filmmakers assert that "most deals are done outside the market, and even before the market." Henry Seggerman, who heads the independent film acquisition department at Paramount, offers a more balanced point of view. "Exhibiting a film at the IFM should only be an element in an overall marketing strategy that includes, among other things, festival exposure, early critical exposure, sidebar at Cannes, sneak previews with specially recruited audiences, etc. The most important thing in the market," he adds, "is to be able to meet with all buyers in one place, especially those who are not based in New York or Los Angeles."

Barbara Margolis, who was presenting her feature–length documentary *Are We Winning Mommy? America and the Cold War*, agrees. Her film was listed in the market's booklet as a work–in–progress film a few years ago. After withdrawing her film at the last minute for practical reasons, she just "hung out," making contacts that are only paying off now. "The problem is that independent filmmakers can't afford to wait for results to materialize," she comments wryly. But the market was a very good experience for her this year. People knew her name, and the film was invited by Ulrich Gregor to the Berlin Film Festival. "He was considering it before, but here he had the chance to see it, instead of my having to send a tape to him. The market speeds things up. It gives people one location and a whole range of films to look at."

Everybody seems to agree: contacts provide most of the real benefits of the market. Margolis nevertheless notes that "often filmmakers do not know who they are talking to. Maybe the distributor they are smothering is only interested in programs for kids. The IFP staff should be a little more thorough in their descriptions of buyers."

For Texas filmmaker Andy Anderson, whose *Positive I.D.* was invited to several festivals (including Sidney, Florence, and the U.S. Film Festival) as a result of its exposure at the market, "things are still happpening," in terms of his distributor contacts. "I am fairly isolated here in Arlington [Texas]; there are very few distributors looking around for films. The market is an opportunity to present the film to a lot of people at once. I also got to meet other people, to see other films. If you don't live in New York, the IFM is a must."

While the completed feature films were projected in the 250–seat Mark Goodson Auditorium, shorter films and works–in– progress were shown on video in smaller screening rooms in the WNET building on West 58th Street. This showcase caused a considerable buzz. By showing unfinished product, filmmakers hope to raise additional money by interesting investors, strike a pre–distribution deal, or get funding from foreign television. Michelle Paymar, who works for Overseas Group, a distribution company based in Los Angeles and represented for the first time at the market, explains, "What's happening in America now is that it has become very competitive to get pictures. So if there is a way we can be helpful in putting up some kind of financing, picking up the postproduction

* Depending on the time of registration, and the category of screening (feature or video), registration fees vary from $150 to $300, on top of a $60 IFP membership fee for individuals, $150 for organizations.

costs, etc. in a film we believe in, it is really worthwhile to try to see them now, to get to know the filmmakers now, because we can perhaps help to finish the film and in exchange get the foreign rights."

According to Beth B, who screened an almost finished version of her new feature, *Salvation*, "I mostly made lots of contacts with the Europeans. They are much more open–minded than the Americans. I'm working on a distribution deal on pre–sale with European TV." But, she adds "You have to go out there and seduce the people into seeing your film, drag them to your screening."

European festivals are also interested in works–in–progress. For example, Ulla Rapp of the Munich Film Festival explains that, while she had already seen some of the "most important" movies elsewhere (Anderson's *Positive I..D.*, Phil Harman's *No Picnic*, Rachel Reichman's *The River Red*, Sara Driver's *Sleepwalk*, and Lizzie Borden's *Working Girls*), she still finds attending the market helpful. "The organization is getting better and better every year. We come to discover filmmakers here, and we also come to make contacts in the film world. We find filmmakers with works–in–progress or struggling to make a movie. And we try to look them up in a year or two." However, while a good script may still find its way to a German producer, the "golden age" of German television support of American independents seems to be over. "Somehow, they look more towards third world countries now," Rapp observed.

For Jean–Pierre Garcia of the Amiens Film Festival, "The market is a key–moment of the year for us, since it is situated between two Cannes Films Festivals; it gives us the opportunity to discover the state of the independent production in the U.S."

The almost 300 buyers, a notable increase from last year, come with a variety of expectations. Some look for "hot items," others for a quiet little movie to distribute without risk. The networks search for their share of documentaries, and the festivals and European TV for more innovative work. Their interests, likes, and dislikes differ: while the U.S. distributors generally thought "it was a good year for independent cinema," the representatives of European festivals were a bit disappointed. Wendy Lidell, a New York–based freelance programmer working for the festivals of Rotterdam, San Sebastian, and Bilbao, comments, "There are only very few movies shown at the market which are of interest to festival circuits, because the market has become increasingly commercial throughout the years. I am looking for more innovative, more subversive, more truly independent work."

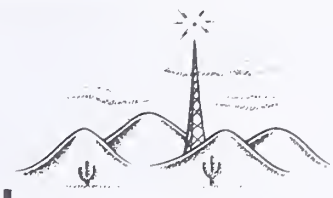
Movies that attract festival programmers are often not the same ones that are picked up by distributors. One of the most obvious examples is Driver's *Sleepwalk*, invited to an extraordinary number of festivals in Europe, Canada, and Latin America, but still looking for U.S. distribution. It's questionable whether the market helps more experimental films. "If they are well connected to festival circuits," says Lidell, "maybe they can do it more cheaply than by entering the IFM." On the other hand, for younger filmmakers whose more experimental work has not yet been widely seen on the international scene like Mark Daniels (*The Influence of Strangers*) or Nina Menkes (*Magdalena Viraga: The Story of a Red Sea Crossing*), the market might be a good platform.

The market is trying to enlarge its scope by welcoming foreign independent movies. This effort remains modest, but might be expanded next year. Last October, in collaboration with the Amiens Film Festival, there was a special screening of Senegalese filmmaker Djibril Diop's 1973 film, *Touki–Bouki*, recently re–released in alternative theaters in France. And, in collaboration with the Franco–American Film Workshop, there was a presentation of Gerard Frot–Coutaz's *Beau Temps mais Orageux en Fin de Journee*.

For Garcia, who has created a market for independent cinema at his Ameins Film Festival, it is vital that all the people interested in the future of "a certain cinema" actively collaborate at an international level. He wants to establish "the basis of a tight relationship between the IFP and the Amiens Market," and works at promoting theatrical release of independent features and shorts in France. "Even a modest theatrical release is vital. It makes it possible for the film to enter the market, for the filmmaker to become known."

Last words of advice if you plan to enter the IFM next year: Rely on the staff. They are courteous, friendly, ready to help, and knowledgeable. In particular, ask them to introduce you to buyers rather than jumping on your prey, who may be trying to finish a cup of coffee or a sandwich. Work hard to bring people to your screening, but do not rely on one screening alone: buyers are busy and have continual scheduling conflicts. Bring good quality videocassettes to give to people likely to be interested in you but who have missed your screening. Most out–of–town buyers stay a few days or even a week after the market to hole up in a screening room with piles of tapes. When the market staff says that "mail boxes are for personal messages only, not for promotional material," believe it. Your publicity kits should be ready to be handed to a sympathetic listener, but don't waste them in mail boxes; they will most likely end up as garbage. Consider the market as part of a long–term overall strategy, not as your salvation. Finally, look at other people's films, and *have fun* .

Berenice Reynaud is a freelance critic and programmer based in New York. Her work is published in Liberation, Cahiers du Cinema, Art Press International, Autrement, Parachute, Afterimage, Fuse, *and* Screen. *She is currently writing a book on independent cinema for Arden Press.*



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All That Glitters . . .



Photomontage by Sherry Millner

Sherry Millner

Editor's note: In this and subsequent issues of The Independent *we will publish some of the papers and transcribed talks delivered at View-Points: A Conference on Women, Culture, and Public Media held at Hunter College in New York City on November 8 and 9, 1986. This national conference was independently organized by a committee of women involved in film, video, and photography (including* The Independent *editor Martha Gever and associate editor Renee Tajima), cosponsored by Women Make Movies and Hunter College Women's Studies Department, and funded by the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York Council on the Humanities.*

□

This paper/talk was prepared for the panel on "Cheap Media," forcing me (happily) to refine my ideas around producing bargain media. The fact that it resembles a manifesto is no accident.

□

The most typical approach in talking about cheap media runs something like this: "Well, I had a very limited budget, and given that, I did the best I could...I cut corners...couldn't do all the stuff I would have if I had the budget I wanted, but...." The tone is apologetic. "Forgive me, forgive my art, make allowances for it because I did the best I could under the circumstances."

Now my position is that you never apologize for being poor. You don't shuffle hat in hand, act humble. You don't *talk* cheap. You *are* cheap. The theory and practice of cheap media has its own validity, a validity that in my opinion often eclipses and/or gives the lie to expensive media.

What I want to do here is lay out a series of interrelated ideas that state the case for cheap media. I'm going to overstate the case deliberately, because the glitter of wealth is so alluring that I suspect that only a pretty unyielding statement will do the trick. I have another reason for overstating the case: few women are as yet able to gain access to producing media. Cheap media may hold out the promise of greater access and immediacy of production for women—particularly for women without access to professional schools and high–tech equipment. The particular areas I want to cover are technology, audience, economics, aesthetics, and politics.

□

Working cheap is suposed to mean that you must limit your access to hardware, that you cannot expect to use so–called state–of–the–art high–tech equipment. I'm not sure this is true. It's more likely to mean that you must be precise in your uses of technology. Whenever you focus you gain intensity. But such concentration means that you must be clear about being in control of the means of production. For example, a good cheap artist won't deny herself the use of special effects

on principle; poverty in this case doesn't mean sacrifice or denial. But effects are used sparingly to make or stylize and, therefore, enhance specific points; they provide emphasis. Denied the chance to become ends in themselves, special effects can never deteriorate into formalist flourishes; they remain *special.* The point here is to avoid setting up high technology as either an ogre or a savior. Both of these images are overwhelming and misleading. But, as an approach to high–tech, cheap media doesn't deny itself anything except the vulgarity of such assumptions.

What the good cheap artist worries about is how to gain *enough* access to technology, *enough* time on the machines to begin to figure out what is possible. She realizes that the more complex and expensive the technology, the more male control there is over the manipulation of that technology. When you're not pushing the buttons yourself, who is in the driver's seat? And we all know that the process of image–making is preeminently an art of decision–making. This is not an attempt to revive the individualist claim to total control. Instead, the issue here is a disciplined attempt to understand the latent potential of whatever machine you have available. How can you do that unless you can have hands–on capability? Too often when that access to technology is not hands–on, the results look alike, the techniques become an end in themselves. In art, as in industry, the machines are intended as labor–saving devices, but—at least in art—they are not supposed to be saving the labor of thought.

□

High–tech, high–budget art is invariably extolled as a sure–fire short cut to a mass audience. All serious media artists desire large responsive audiences. You can't get large audiences unless you imitate the production values of the dominant media. Therefore, you strive to attain the seductive high–gloss surface of the major consumer products. Cheap art, this argument holds, is just not in the running. By the Mayor Kochs of the high–tech world we are consigned to minimal, out–of–the–way shelters or, virtually homeless, must beg for crumbs from beleaguered foundations. And, as our mothers always warned us, beggars can't be choosers.

Our response is that many small audiences often add up to much more than one large audience. What may be at stake here are two different concepts of what it means to reach an audience. Expensive media fits the mass notion of bourgeois representative democracy. If your aim is to reach the most people—sheer numbers—in the smallest amount of time, then it behooves you to dilute your project as much as it can bear and still taste like something. This is sort of a Gatorade approach. Cheap art, on the other hand, fits a more radical concept of democracy, based not



TV: SURGEON of the SOUL

Photomontage by Sherry Miiner

on the theory of mass reception predicated on a certifiable degree of audience passivity, but on the self–motivation, participation, and volatility of small, identifiable audiences. To continue the metaphor of thirst, which is more fortifying—Gatorade or orange juice you squeeze yourself? Cheap artists prefer the intimacy and involvement of many small audiences. This preference has both aesthetic and political implications.

□

Cheap media must necessarily ground itself in the economy of the everyday. It digs in rather than looking out. Yet the experienced cheapie does not acknowledge constraint. Instead, she regards rummaging in the bargain basement with appetite and a kind of visceral anticipation. The result is not merely a bargain but a prize, a real find.

I've always shopped at discount stores (often out of necessity). In fact, I like flea markets even better, and cheap media approximates the same sensibility. So maybe bargain media is a better term than cheap media—the only place you can still get something for next to nothing. And its polar opposite, expensive media, might better be called overpriced media, because like overpriced clothing you get less than you pay for.

Low budgets force alternative solutions to aesthetic problems. If your ideas are threadbare, it is certainly much easier to disguise the fact by dressing them up in high–fashion, high–tech. Wowed by the effect, you don't bother to consider what it means. What happens when you can't rely on technology to produce your effect? Your have to produce it yourself. You actually have to invent your own means of production.

Although the strategy of five years of arduous fundraising in order to spend a year making a film or tape is understandable, the time lost seems more of a hardship than the lack of money. The ability to represent ideas or issues or events without the long lag between conception and execution extends to cheap media the great benefit of immediacy. The value of immediacy may lie in the necessity to grasp the complexity of lived experience in its own time, its own lived moment.

Bargain media often relies heavily on the use of props: usually inexpensive dime–store items or second–hand goods, things that have already been discarded and recycled. Instead of buying stock footage, you tend to pirate it off the air, instead of traveling to a location, you use a postcard. When I needed a battle scene for *Scenes from the Micro–War,* I used 50 toy soldiers, some dirt and shrubs, small firecrackers and toy caps, and burned it all up on the small patio of my sublet apartment. If I need props that I can't make myself I buy them discount and when the shooting stops I sell them back at the flea market. The raffish look of most cheap media tends to mock the pretensions of commodity culture or, better yet, challenge them.

Bargain media is not only inexpensive, but employs an economy of means so that in the means one can perceive the ends. In overpriced media the means often exceed the ends.

□

Since it is not obliged to attract huge audiences, bargain media does not have to be nice, pleasant, or well–behaved. It doesn't have to sugar–coat its intentions. Throwing aside expectations about what media should look like or what it should say, bargain media can afford to be offensive and to encourage people to take sides. But overpriced media is obliged to be polite, to avoid too many risks, and to resist challenging assumptions. Overpriced art assumes consensus, cheap art assumes commitment. Who would make cheap art if not committed to it, if the urgency to produce media didn't outstrip her or his means? Like it or not you are always fighting two battles at once: for an alternative content embodied in an alternative form. What you say tends to be risky, but how you say it often provokes as much trouble.

One rich vein of much cheap media is the revelation of its own process, a process in which the homemade and the handmade are reconciled with technology. And, of course, as cheap feminists we are interested in undermining the separation between artmaking and daily life. Cheap media revels in the notion of texture, trying to enrich the surface, not hiding the seams, the awkwardness, or even the mistakes. Heterogeneity allows for multiple possibilities, while the homogeneity of overpriced media produces an uninflected surface, a slickness, a seamlessness. Cheap media's interest in—even insistence on—exposing its own making matches its interest in revealing the more or less hidden relationships of power.

My own interest is in making work that foregrounds everyday life, the family, the body—to try to represent even in a small way what is not being represented by the dominant media. And that commitment extends to formal issues as well as to content—a commitment to represent in the making, in the way the images are put together, an aesthetic that is not represented by the dominant media. The point is to encourage people to take control of their own lives, their own images, to begin representing their own struggles without a high degree of technical expertise to become speaking subjects, makers of meaning, active participants instead of passive consumers. In an era in which budgets are ballooning everywhere, cheap media may be the last refuge for tough–minded political artists.

I wish to thank Ernest Larsen, with whom many of these ideas have been developed.

Sherry Millner is a film and videomaker currently teaching at Rutgers University. Her recent videotapes include Womb with a View *and* Scenes from the Micro–War.

© Sherry Millner 1987

A Film **With** History

Lynne Tillman

This paper/talk grew out of discussions Yvonne Rainer and I had as preparation for our panel, entitled "Making History: Revising and Representing." I chose to begin by speaking about *Committed*, to focus on my practice, which is informed by theory. Or, rather, is my theory.

□

Committed has been called a biopic; and worse, it's been called a docudrama. Both terms deny the film its interpretive, its fictional aspects. I think of *Committed*, the film I co–directed with Sheila McLaughlin, as a film *with* history. *Committed* tries to locate a person's life within a particular social, political, and historical framework. It includes not just psychological insights into a person's life, but social facts—facts with which an individual interacts in a lifetime.

By social facts I mean, for instance, the way in which the judge who orders Frances Farmer's commitment is represented. In a few lines of dialogue he espouses a philosophy—anti–communist, profamily, religious (he's a minister)—and all of these "facts" delineate who he is within the American social fabric of the time. And what issues of the time are expressed through an individual who claims certain ideas, specific ideas.

Frances' mother, Lillian, is seen addressing the nation over the radio, warning other mothers against communism. This is followed by a radio announcer who presents, as part of a newscast, excerpts from the proceedings of the Congress on Mental Hygiene, held in Washington, D.C., in 1930. (The speeches he reads represent the only documents in the film.) The mother's speech tells us something about the political climate, as well as the role of the family—in particular, mothers—in regard to the state. The radio announcer presents the "learned speech," the conventional wisdom, of mental hygiene professionals and the psychiatric establishment in regard to mental illness and good citizenship. And it is against this background that Frances Farmer will be judged insane. All of these scenes occur in the first eight minutes of the film.

So by being a film *with* history I mean that *Committed* attempts to interpret for a contemporary audience what forces might determine the shape of a person's life, within a particular time. If the country were not hell-bent on the idea of mental hygiene and good citizenship, if the country were not in a period of intense anti–communist and pro–communist activity, Frances Farmer's life would have been different. This may seem too obvious even to mention, but I don't think so. And this is not to deny the psychological issues between Frances and her mother, for example, which we also deal with in the film. But through the agency of one person one can speak about a historical period. Through one person's history, one can say a great deal about history. And in this, narrative form can be used very effectively.

On the other hand, the Hollywood film *Frances* denudes Frances Farmer of this his-



Courtesy Women Make Movies

tory, so that her life appears to exist or hang suspended outside the play of historical and current events, turning her life into the worst example of one woman's defeat, an individual failure, rather than a failure that many others could suffer, too, and did.

One of the things *Committed* does is construct a voice, a fictionalized voice, for someone called Frances Farmer. And it places that voice against at least five others—law, psychiatry, politics, Hollywood, the family. By having these "voices" in juxtaposition with each other, we arrive at a way to see an individual operating within the institutions; we allow for an interpenetration of ideas, voices, institutions. We allow for ambiguity and contradiction. In this way *Committed* problematizes what makes an individual and what an individual might be rather than simplifying that process.

In this I believe I'm participating, as both a filmmaker and a novelist, in the recent turn to and interest in narrative as a way to tell "the truth." Or to complicate it—to represent our lives in fiction through narrative or as fictions. In the Women's Movement of the late sixties and early seventies, there was an emphasis on telling "the truth" through documentary, through the use of documents. Early on we learned that few documents existed, and that without diaries and letters we'd have almost no knowledge of women's lives. This would seem to call for a great deal of invention on our parts to create a history. Or, like people's history, an effort to look at what got thrown away, went unrecorded, was submerged or suppressed. Or perhaps it might mean that we'll never be able to reconstruct women's history entirely *through record.*

This seems to me fertile ground for fiction—for interpretation, since history itself can be called a series of interpretations or constructions, with those in power establishing official history and those of us out of power insisting on what gets called unofficial history. Or is sometimes called propaganda. *Committed* has been called propaganda, or agitprop. What's called propaganda is always that philosophy and information different from that which is held by those in power.

History is working with and constructing meaning(s), and power depends on the ability to define and impose meaning. And since everything we do operates out of a politic, even when a maker might think not, all work can be considered propaganda. The word comes from the Church. Pope Gregory XV organized a congregation for propagating the faith, and one might even consider that this conference, or congregation, is something to propagate the faith. Our faith in feminism, our interest in representation. How we propagate the faith—what strategies we employ, what forms our ideas will take—is extremely important.

We chose to represent Frances Farmer through a clash of fictional interpretations and constructions to avoid the position that we knew or could claim a real Frances Farmer. We did not hope to arrive at who Frances Farmer really was. We wanted to present a set of possibilities, a complicated matrix that could represent the fact that the self is not an absolute, divinely set entity. We did not see her as a role model, nor did we want to represent her as victim.

We didn't want the film to be understood as one woman's struggle, ending in victimization or triumph. Most Hollywood films that pretend to "women's liberation" do that—tell that story, the Henrietta Alger story. But as we know, one woman's triumph is not enough. And if I don't want heroes, do I really want heroines?

Lynne Tillman is a filmmaker and writer. Her novel Haunted Houses *will be published in February 1987 by Poseidon Press (Simon & Schuster).*

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Board in Flames

CONSERVATIVES TAKE CONTROL AT CPB

Martha Gever

This year the public television system in the United States will celebrate the end of its second decade. Since its inception in 1967, the system, composed of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and its offshoot, the Public Broadcasting Service (created by CPB in 1969), has become a fixture of U.S. television and expanded from a loose conglomerate of 125 educational TV stations* to the equivalent of a fourth network in the continental U.S. But, in a country where telecommunications, and television in particular, have always been driven by commercial interests, public television remains an anomoly—and an ideological battleground.

From the days of the first Carnegie Commission on Educational Television, the group convened in the mid–sixties to study the possible creation of a national public system and make recommendations to government and the public at large, to the present, the dangers of direct political pressure have been acknowledged. A primary rationale for the design of the CPB structure was to insulate those responsible for program production and distribution from political interests: those of Congress and the executive branch. However, having established a system where the president appoints the directors of the coordinating and program–financing entity, CPB, and where Congress provides a sizable portion of the budget, politics inevitably enter the scene.

Ronald Reagan, much like Richard Nixon, has been outspokenly hostile to the idea and existence of public broadcasting. Backed by eloquent neoconservative rhetoric, Reagan proposed crippling public television by eliminating all federal funding in his 1981 budget. Congress balked and the system survived the trauma of substantial budget cuts. In subsequent years, the levels of federal support for CPB—and, through the mechanisms of disbursal of CPB funds to the stations, to PBS as well—have increased by increments below those recommended under Jimmy Carter but sufficient to keep operations intact.* Now, after six years in office, another Reagan–inspired assault on public broadcasting is being engineered by the governing body of CPB, its board of directors, which currently counts four proven conservatives, two liberal dissidents, and one political unknown.

Actually, to attribute any of the political warfare taking place around public television to Reagan is a figure of speech; Reagan merely stands for the various neoconservative, right–wing ideologues who have achieved power during his presidency—individuals as diverse as new Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist and former National Endowment of the Humanities chair, now Secretary of Education William Bennett. To imagine that the CPB board would escape such influences would require willful ignorance. Thus the appointment of Sonia Landau, once chair of Women for Reagan/Bush, and Richard Brookhiser, senior editor of the *National Review*, to the CPB board in 1981 and '82 respectively, and Landau's subsequent ascendancy to the board chair in 1984, signalled a rightward swing at CPB. But only in the past year or so have the effects of these changes become pronounced. Last spring, following the expiration of Landau's term, Brookhiser proposed that CPB undertake a study of the political content of documentaries on public television. Leaving little to chance, Brookhiser named the communications researchers to be hired—political scientist S. Robert Lichter and his wife, sociologist Susan Lichter, both on the faculty of George Washington University—and the budget for the project—$180,000 plus. Following protests from PBS executives, including PBS president Bruce Christensen, and Representative John Dingell (D–Michigan), who chairs the House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, with jurisdiction over the Communications Act of 1934 and thus the activities of CPB, Brookhiser's plan was tabled. The idea didn't die, however, and last October, as soon as Congress adjourned, Brookhiser instructed CPB management to put the study in motion. Researchers other than the Lichters have been asked to bid for the contract, although respected media scholars critical of mainstream communications structures such as Herbert Gans and George Gerbner were conspicuously absent from the list of those approached. Only a day before the RFPs were issued, PBS defensively announced implementation of its own in–house study of documentaries it has aired.

To anyone aware of the ideological shadings possible in social science research, the political fodder that a content analysis might supply is evident. Less immediately apparent is the motive of the conservative majority on the CPB board in demanding the resignation of CPB president Martin Rubenstein, less than a year after his appointment. Rubenstein, who came to CPB from a 25–year career in commercial broadcasting at ABC and Mutual Broadcasting, was forced to resign during the November board meeting under circumstances that remain murky. According to reports in the *Washingtom Post* and the *Los Angeles Times*, Landau, no longer on the board but still active behind the scenes, and Brookhiser were both critical of Rubenstein's attempts to revamp CPB's contracting procedures [see "Bargains Galore: CPB Contracts and Independent Producers," *The Independent*, December 1986], a reorganization of CPB business that diminished the power of CPB vice president, treasurer, and Landau favorite, Donald Ledwig. There is also speculation that Rubenstein's less than whole–hearted support for the content analysis proposal may have been a factor. Hours after Rubenstein's resignation was secured by the board, Ledwig, a retired U.S. Navy captain was named acting president of the corporation.

Whatever the cause, Rubenstein is the second CPB president to exit CPB after disputes with Landau and her supporters on the board. In May 1985, Rubenstein's predecessor Edward Pfister handed the board his resignation after an acrimonious session where Landau, Brookhiser, and other conservative board members condemned plans for a CPB mission to

* Public radio, a significant component of the public broadcasting system, falls beyond the scope of this article.

* For example, the appropriation for CPB in 1982 was $172–million, as compared to the $200–million authorized at the end of Carter's presidency; the figures for 1983 were $137–million appropriation and $200–million authorization; and the 1984 authorization of $145–million ($137.5–million appropriated) reflects the public broadcasting policies of the Reagan administration.

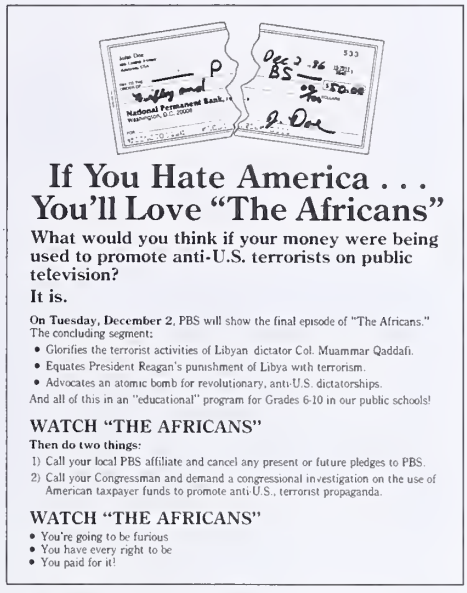
the Soviet Union and passed a motion to cancel the trip [see "Cold Wars Waged at CPB," *The Independent*, July/August 1985]. While neither Pfister nor Rubenstein could conceivably be labeled left–wing or even outstandingly liberal, it seems that the present CPB board demands a loyal ideologue to manage its day to day affairs. And, despite insistence by Landau and her allies on the board that they have no interest in overseeing program decisions, restated by Landau as recently as September 1986 during the Senate hearings on her renomination, the content analysis project bodes ill for those whose work may be determined "not objective" or "biased."

The bias suspected to be over–represented on public television is, without doubt, liberal or, worse, left–wing. And, on this score, Brookhiser et al. exhibit suspicions in accord with those of the right–wing organization Accuracy in Media. AIM and its vociferous leader, Reed Irvine, have become household words to anyone attuned to public television disputes in this decade. Active as critics of the "liberal press" since the mid–seventies, AIM cut its teeth on the WGBH–produced 1984 series *Vietnam: A Television History*, which it attacked as severely distorted. AIM then secured funding from the NEH (a chairman's grant from Bennett) for its own televised rebuttal, *Television's Vietnam: The Real Story* [see "Bennett Takes AIM," *The Independent*, September 1984]. This fall, AIM joined a concerted campaign against the WETA/BBC coproduction *The Africans* series, coordinating its denunciations with those issued by the National Conservative Foundation and the NEH, one of the series' funders [see "NEH Disowns 'The Africans,'" *The Independent*, November 1986].

Granted, AIM claims few diehard supporters and limited currency.* More notable, perhaps, is the corroboration between the positions taken by CPB board members Brookhiser, Howard Gutin, and Ken Towery, and their former colleague Landau and the regularly published commentaries on public television programs by John Corry, a staff television critic for the *New York Times*. Corry, it is well–known but rarely mentioned, is married to Landau. No conspiracy scenario is needed to perceive some of the common ground they share, an ideological position also taken by Brookhiser, Gutin et al. Rather than trying to read the silences surrounding the arrivals and departures of high–ranking CPB personnel to determine the political environment of CPB circa 1987, it may be instructive to examine Corry's public pronouncements and listen for the echoes in recent CPB policy decisions.

□

In addition to his regular columns in the *Times*, Corry published a curious booklet last spring that spells out his views on contemporary television journalism, including a short section on "The PBS Citadel." Corry argues in his tract, *TV News and the Dominant Culture*, that television news reporters and thus reportage in the U.S. inevitably veer to the left. Inevitable because "the dominant culture" is the domain of a left–wing intelligensia who define and control cultural values in this country. This situation, he maintains, is yet another sorry residue of the sixties: "Counterculture politics introduced the notion of victims, a category wide enough to include everyone except middle–aged white males." Laughable to anyone with even a slight progressive streak who watches any network public affairs programs and most of those on public television, Corry proclaims, "Whatever the recent literary gains of neoconservatives [such as those of the Irving Kristol/Norman Podhoretz/Hilton Kramer ilk, profiled in a *New York Times Sunday Magazine* feature cited by Corry], the dominant culture still favors the left."



The National Conservative Foundation spent $100,000 on ads, such as this one that appeared in the November 24 issue of *Broadcasting*, to call attention to what it and other right–wing organizations consider "leftist propaganda" on public television.

Corry quotes authorities like Henry Kissinger on the U.S. press' treatment of the overthrow of the Allende government in Chile and related criticisms of Pinochet's brutality. He cites the theoretical musings of Jeane Kirkpatrick and Ben Wattenberg, another neocon notable. He faults the press coverage of the 1968 Convention for bringing about the political downfall of Hubert Humphrey, "a decent man." And he finds the AIM response to *Vietnam: a Television History* "a provocative documentary...persuasive...AIM's conservative prejudices nothwithstanding."

For the most part, Corry relies on his own fractured versions of historical truth and interpretation, e.g., "...there was no evidence that the Central Intelligence Agency, or any other part of the United States Government, was involved" in the Chilean coup. But most curious, in light of the CPB connection, is the weight Corry gives to a study of voting patterns among television journalists which he uses as elementary proof of his thesis about left–wing bias, a study conducted by Stanley Rothman and *S. Robert Lichter*.

Rothman and Lichter, Corry notes, "found that members of the public–broadcasting community were more liberal in their attitudes than their counterparts at the three commercial networks." And, on the subject of public broadcasting, Corry launches into his most extreme polemic:

> [Public broadcasting] was conceived in the '60s, when the Johnson Administration was interested in setting up all good things, and the idea that broadcasting might not be a proper involvement for government was never really discussed. Why, for example, should taxpayers' dollars be used to produce news shows?
>
> [Broadcasting] is a billion–dollar industry that long ago outgrew the need for federal subsidies, and long ago moved away from the idea that it was supposed to operate in the public interest.

In his discussion of public television programming, following such rejections of the entire concept, Corry mentions only one title: *Guatemala: When the Mountains Tremble* and then dismisses his solitary example as a "vanity film, arguing an anti–democratic, anti–United States position." He then disingenously assigns *When the Mountains Tremble* something akin to favored status with the "PBS citadel," although it "it seemed a good deal more to the left than AIM's Vietnam documentary had been to the right." In fact, the *Mountains* producers had to contend with PBS delays and demands to get them to honor their agreement to air the program and had to agree to a panel discussion among PBS–approved "experts," including a State Department spokesperson [see "When the Stations Tremble," *The Independent*, December 1985].

But unpatriotic anti–Americanism is the battle–ax Corry wields to make his case against broadcast journalism. He begins and ends on that note. "[T]he Communist threat is real, cruel, and dangerous; when journalism doesn't identify it as such, journalism is bending to the left," he writes in his opening comments. Concluding with a discussion on "Trivialization of the News," he condemns

* In "The Rise and Decline of Accuracy in Media," in the September 13, 1986 issue of the *Nation*, Michael Massing contends that few media professionals consider Reed Irvine or AIM as responsible or serious critics of their work, despite Irvine's aggressive tactics and persistence.

the "spacebridge" programs that allow live exchanges between audiences in the U.S. and the Soviet Union via satellite. "Substantive issues are dissolved," he laments. Presumably, he decries any demystification of "the Evil Empire."

TV News and the Dominant Culture gives us unadulterated Corry, but published in an obscure edition by a business–oriented think–tank called the Media Institute (which has also published work by the Lichters), presumably for insiders. But anyone who reads the *New York Times*, either as a local paper or as respected national daily, regularly encounters Corry's opinions on a number of public television offerings. Over time the line has become quite predictable. Peter Davis' *Mandela* is "suspect in its message...so determined to take a moral stance that it flouts the rules of reporting." *The Africans* is "anti–Western," and, according to Corry "anti–democratic," deserving whatever condemnation the series receives. The series' scriptwriter and narrator, Ali A. Mazrui, in Corry's mind, uses the word "imperialism... interchangeably with capitalism and colonialism...practiced only by the West.... Mazrui uses facts and statistics like an ideologist and not a historian." But he finds the most recent AIM corrective to left–leaning Vietnam histories, although "flawed...does speak for itself." Another public television documentary, *Cuba: In the Shadow of a Doubt*, falls prey to commie sympathizing, indulging in "misrepresentation," and is finally deemed "calculated propaganda." A *Firing Line* special, *The Media and 'Harvest of Despair,'* however, "is true" and "represent[s] what may have been one of the world's greatest examples of distorted news."

Usually in his *Times* reviews Corry's own ideological bias is played down, disguised as the voice of (liberal) "objectivity." But when he considered Lizzie Borden's *Born in Flames* in the television section of the August 24, 1986, Sunday edition of the *Times*, he produced some of his most vituperative prose to date. Like other work he judges objectionable, Corry describes the film as "a vanity production, poorly done." And he goes on to hang an argument against federal funding for public television on his loathing of *Born in Flames*—"left–wing sludge."

> Productions like this provide an argument for the abolition of Federal financing. Liberal apologists for public television pretend the programs don't exist.
>
> ...There is an area of inpenetrable fog here. Public television believes it has a mandate—although unclear—to present the works of independent film makers and producers. But who or what is an independent film maker?...

It's conceivable if nevertheless surprising that Corry, who claims detailed knowledge about the workings of public television, is ignorant of the terms of the 1978 federal public broadcasting legislation, which requires that a "substantial amount" of CPB's production funds be allocated for independent work. Yet, Corry's outrage when faced with independent work that breaks with stylistic conventions and openly engages politics—left, feminist, lesbian, or, for that matter, those of the African National Congress or Cuban socialism, or...—could be written off as just another player in the ideological conflict over culture. Could be, that is, if the powerful CPB board weren't enlisted in the same ideological campaign.

□

Since it's beginnings in the late sixties, public television has been presumed to be above politics; the public affairs staff at PBS grapples endlessly with efforts to achieve an elusive balance in its public affairs programming. In the announcement of PBS's internal review of the policies and standards governing program selection, PBS president Christensen emphasized commitment to "program and editorial independence." The intent, apparently, is to refute censorious voices on the right, but the project signals that PBS has been seriously shaken by opponents of its liberalish programming. Even Landau, during her tenure as CPB chair, countered accusations that she had politicized the board or brought politics to bear on the management and policies of the corporation. And Landau's critics employ the same rhetoric, invoking vague ideals of presumably value–free "quality" television. Politics here primarily refers to party affiliations—Republican or Democrat—deflecting more substantial discussions about or conflict over public vs. private control of televised information and entertainment.

CPB has been a political entity since day one—as has commercial broadcasting—since its conception in the Great Society era to its current incarnation as the purveyer of traditional values, with tasteful promotions for giant businesses. But public broadcasting can't so easily cast aside the concept of public service that entrepreneurial broadcasters have, as Corry points out, left far behind. The interest of independent producers, then, in public television must be conceived as more than a proposition for apolitical diversity, but as a political position, in opposition to those who use select facts and self-righteous accusations of anti–Americanism to deny dissent in this country.

It's unlikely that a conservative CPB board will apply the findings of its proposed content analysis to demand more right–wing documentaries, since *public* television seems an anathema to conservative ideologues. And, although perhaps not sufficiently patriotic for Corry's taste, commercial television and even public television supply plenty of public affairs programs suited to dedicated conservatives. Think only of *Wall Street Week* or *Adam Smith's Money World*. Taking Corry as a weathervane, it's probable that the content data will become ammunition in monetary warfare, intended to eliminate funding for documentaries that question official U.S. policy, particularly foreign policy, past or present. Dissenters, surely, are being put on notice.

POSTSCRIPT

As this article was taking shape, the political maneuvers of the CPB board suggest a harsher assessment of political alignments, allegiances, and influences than previous caution regarding conspiracy theories allowed. Writing in *Current*, the public broadcasting organ, J.J. Yore reported some of the details of the November CPB board meeting. He related how the new board chair, William Lee Hanley invited Sonia Landau to address the meeting. Reading from what Yore described as a 10–page speech, Landau gave her views on controversial public television programs. She reminded her audience, "Objectivity and balance is the business of this corporation.... News is not the issue. The issue is documentaries. We cannot ignore programs such as *Guatemala: When the Mountains Tremble, The Africans, Cuba: In the Shadow of a Doubt*—and the list goes on.... The public wants to know why CPB is so lax in our oversight function." If public broadcasting does not answer to the "public" Landau has in mind, she warned, "There should also be an acknowledgement that public broadcasting is a billion dollar industry capable of functioning well without the entanglements and obligations connected with federal dollars."

Landau's chances for reappointment to the CPB board evaporated when the Democrats won control of the Senate in the last election. But she has remained visibly active in CPB politicking nevertheless. And John Corry, who publicly traffics his ideas in the pages of a prestigious newspaper, isn't far from this seat of power either. Landau's paraphrase of Corry's specious sentiments couldn't have made the point better. Reed Irvine, among those observing the CPB board meeting, must have been pleased. Why was Landau given such prominence in this embattled forum? What other echoes can we anticipate?

Thanks to Andrew Blau and Quynh Thai for assistance in researching this article.

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AUSTRALIAN ODYSSEY: THE SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE FILM FESTIVALS



***Working Girls* screened at the revitalized Melbourne Film Festival.**
Courtesy filmmaker

In June, when we in the northern hemisphere are in the full throes of spring fever, winter is beginning "down under" in Australia. In addition to marking the beginning of the cold, June is also the season for film festivals, with events in both Sydney and Melbourne. As both festivals are conveniently timed about two weeks apart, filmmakers can take in the sights of Sydney and make it to Melbourne with time to spare—providing they can afford the formidable cost of airline travel to Australia in the first place. Unfortunately, because transportation is so expensive, the festivals cannot provide travel assistance to guests. But those who finagle a way there will find appreciative and helpful hosts, excellent screening facilities, and large and responsive audiences.

Sydney, headquarters to the main television networks, film companies, and cultural institutions, is somewhat more cosmopolitan than Melbourne, where the nation's business and financial interests are concentrated. Ironically, the Melbourne festival has been plagued by financial problems and recently was forced to declare bankruptcy. However, under the new leadership of Santina Musumeci, Melbourne made a dramatic comeback last year, presenting a fine selection of films while remaining in the black. Despite the natural competition between the two urban centers, the festivals work closely together. They schedule screenings to allow a single print and possibly the filmmaker to travel first to Sydney and then to Melbourne, and they also split the expenses of transporting certain films invited to both events. Rod Webb, Sydney's director, travels the world during part of the year, looking for films for his own event, as well as ones he can recommend to Melbourne's programmers. In February or March, he stops in New York City to sequester himself in a hotel room with a VCR and a pile of cassettes provided by FIVF's Festival Bureau. Most U.S. films are shipped to and from Australia by FIVF; Sydney picks up the tab while Melbourne makes a contribution. Webb is known for his interest in progressive political films and documentaries, which accounts in part for the strong presence of U.S. independents at Sydney. Filmmakers should remember, however, that while Webb passes the word about films to Melbourne's programmers, the latter inevitably have different tastes. Melbourne, for example, has a special interest in children's films. So to ensure consideration by Melbourne, it's advisable to contact that festival directly.

In 1986, Sydney and Melbourne shared a number of independent U.S. films, including *Sherman's March*, by Ross McElwee; *Re-animator*, by Stuart Gordon; Laurie Anderson's *Home of the Brave*; *The Mothers of the Plazo de Mayo*, by Susana Munoz and Lourdes Portillo; and several films by Robert Mugge. Sydney alone screened *Vladimir Horwitz: The Last Romantic*, by Albert and David Maysles;*Machito*, by Carlos Ortiz; *American Rebel*, by Will Roberts; *Witness to Apartheid*, by Sharon Sopher; and *Steve Lacy: Lift the Bandstand*, by Peter Bull. Titles shown exclusively at Melbourne included Charlie Ahearn's *Wild Style; Working Girls*, by Lizzie Borden; *Mountain Music of Peru*, by John Cohen; and Kirby Dick's *Private Practices*. Robert Mugge reports that last year, due to an unfortunate coincidence, two U.S. warships arrived in Sydney during the early part of the festival, and one caused a political furor when it rammed a boat filled with waiting demonstrators. Yet, despite the anti–U.S. tone of street demonstrations, festival audiences extended warm greetings to U.S. filmmakers and their works.

Both festivals are primarily noncompetitive celebrations of film, although Melbourne presents an international competition for short films. Screening facilities are excellent, including surprisingly good video projection equipment. Sydney director Webb is unusually visible and available, as he introduces nearly every screening at both festival cinemas and spends the remainder of his time in the hotel's festival suite. The staffs at both festivals help filmakers set up interviews with the local media and get reviews, as well as act as liaisons with film buyers, distributors, and local filmmakers. Efforts are also made to arrange special trips, meals, and receptions for interested guests.

Even assuming the excellence of the hospitality and facilities offered in Australia, why travel halfway around the world for a couple of film festivals? Australia offers a large English–speaking audience; it has a thriving circuit of art houses; Australian television pays well for independent productions; and the easiest way for a film to establish itself there is through these much–publicized film festivals. And because few foreign filmmakers can attend these distant events, a great sense of appreciation is shown to those who make the effort. If you do plan to attend, its best to let the festival staff know as soon as possible. Once there, you might as well make a vacation of it. After attending both festivals, U.S. filmmaker Mugge traveled north to the tropical town of Cairn to snorkle around the Great Barrier Reef; German director Reinhard Hauff took off for the outback to experience life far away from civilization; and British director Ken McMullen headed off in search of locations and funding for his next project. Although you

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are likely to go to Sydney and Melbourne primarily for the same reason you travel to any fyour work—you will likely find myriad excuses not to hurry home.

Thirty–third Sidney Film Festival will be held in early June. Formats: 35mm & 16mm. Noncompetitive. Send SASE for application form to Sydney Film Festival, c/o FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, by Feb. 1. Sydney director Rod Webb will be in New York the first week in March. To submit your film for consideration, send 16mm print, 3/4", or VHS (video for preselection only*), with completed application and $20 check, made payable to FIVF, to address above, by February 20. Deadline for direct submissions to Sydney is end of March. Festival address: Sydney Film Festival, Box 25, PO Glebe, N.S.W., Australia 2037; tel. 02 660 3844; telex 75111.*

Thirty–fifth Melbourne Film Festival will be held June 19–29,1987. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8 & video. Deadline for direct submissions: forms, March 31; prints & tapes, April 7. Competition for short films under 60 minutes. only. *$1,500 prizes in documentary, fiction, experimental & animation categories; $4,000 grand prize. Super 8 & video entries must be submitted directly to Melbourne. Contact Melbourne Film Festival, GPO Box 2760 EE, Melbourne, 3001, Australia; tel. (03) 663 2953; telex AA 152613.*

For both festivals, films must have been completed in the last 12 months & not have been previously shown in respective cities.

CANNES DO

The 39th Cannes Film Festival, held May 8–19, 1986, featured the European premieres of five films by U.S. independent directors. Lizzie Borden's *Working Girls* and Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It* , selected by Pierre–Henri Deleau and Olivier Jahan during screenings in New York in March, were featured in the Directors Fortnight section. Glen Pitrie's *Belizaire The Cajun* unspooled in the five–picture Un Certain Regard section, which also featured Eugene Corr's 20th Century release *Desert Bloom*. Sara Driver's *Sleepwalk* was the sole U.S. entry out of seven films selected from 149 titles screened in the Critics Week, which highlights first and second features in all genres and formats. And finally, Jim Jarmusch's second feature, *Down By Law*, achieved the most prestigious slot, having been selected for the 25–film Official Competition, making it eligible for the festival's grand prize, the Palme d'Or (won by Roland Joffe's *The Mission).* Short films are eligible for a separate Palme and are screened in the Official Section with the features. Chuck Workman's *Precious Images* was the only U.S. short in the festival and was shown out of competition.



The now infamous Nola Darling (Tracy Camila Johns) tries to convince Jamie Overstreet (Redmond Hicks) that he's her one and only in Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It*, which screened at Cannes.
Courtesy Island Pictures

There are no entry fees for entering Cannes, but once accepted, producers' expenses mount. Producers are responsible for subtitling, shipping, transportation, and accomodations. Even the most cost–conscious promotional effort includes posters, flyers, stills, and press packets—and Cannes is attended by some 3,000 journalists.

Last year's terror scare was the big story that never happened, but pre–festival paranoia did reduce the overall U.S. industry presence, giving the independents a shot at the media. Even though the mini–majors (or major–indies) like Cannon and Hemdale dominated the pages of the dailies, Pitrie headed up *Variety*'s gossip column and Lee managed three mentions in one edition. Sam Kitt, Karen Arikian, and Sandra Schulberg of the Independent Feature Market pulled off a successful cocktail party/conference to promote the five U.S. filmmakers—a first for U.S. independents. Producer Schulberg also led a crusade on behalf of the Old Palais, present home of the Directors Fortnight, which was slated for demolition and replacement by a casino. The campaign worked, and Deleau, Jahan, and company will have a venue in 1987 for their popular selection of independent films.

To qualify for any section of the festival, a film must have its European premiere in Cannes. Entry regulations may be obtained from the French Film Office, 745 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10151; (212) 832–8860. Screenings for the Fortnight take place at the Lorimar screening room under the auspices of Ed Ko. An invaluable resource for English–speaking guests in Cannes is Lucius Barre, an American who works in the press office.

Screenings, press conferences, and parties on the beach or in hotel suites can make the festival a round–the–clock event. Most of the activity is limited to a mile of beach–front hotels and cafés (including the famous Carlton Terrace) between the Old Palais and its new, multi–screen namesake. A few days of traversing this strip has been known to wear down the most resilient. Wend your way up the narrow streets behind the action into the old city for a change of pace and a spectacular view. And go to the Petit Carlton Bar for the very late night activity.

ROBERT AARONSON

Films can be entered in any and all sections. Deadlines vary between March and April, depending on section. Entry forms are required and hotel rooms are booked up to eight months in advance. Contact the French Film Office in New York, or, for the Official Competition, contact International Festival du Film, 71, rue du Faubourg Saint Honore, F 75008 Paris; tel. 266 92 20; telex 65076 F. For Directors Fornight, contact Societe de Realisateurs de Film, 215, rue de Faubourg Saint Honore, F75008; tel. 5610166; telex 22064 (ref:1311). For Critics Week, contact Semaine International de la Critique, 73, rue d'Anjou, F75008 Paris; tel. 387 36 16; telex 650407.

Robert Aaronson is assistant director of the Artists Sponsorship Program at the the New York Foundation for the Arts.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Coco Fusco. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement**, and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 10–15, MI. 185 films were submitted last yr & half were shown. $5000 in prize money divided as follows: $1000 for the most promising filmmaker, plus approx. 25 other prizes, the number & size of which are determined by the judges. Kabir Mohanty took the top prize in '86 for *Eldon Moss*. Tour of selected films follows festival. Format: 16mm only, optical or silent soundtrack. Fee: $17. Deadline: Feb. 28. Contact Annette Wilson, Director, Ann Arbor Film Festival, Box 8232, Ann Arbor, MI 48107; (313) 995–5356.

ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, June, NYC. Presented by Asian CineVision. Noncompetitive showcase for Asian & Asian–American directors & an introduction to Asian cinema for US audiences. Foreign countries represented incl. Japan, Philippines, Hong Kong, China, India, Taiwan & Korea. 19 films were chosen from 30 submissions. Of those 19, the 13 Asian–American films toured 15 US cities after screenings at Chinatown's Rosemary Theatre. Asian–American films incl. Lisa Hsia's *Made in China*, Morakot Piyakesin's *Back Home* & Ye Sook Rhee's

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Birth Eye. Asian–American film coordinator Peter Chow organizes the event w/ Asian CineVision director Marlena Gonzalez. No fee. Format: 16mm & 35 mm. Deadline: Mar. 15. Contact ACV, 32 E. Broadway, New York, NY 10002; (212) 925–8685.

ATHENS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, May 2–9, OH. 14th annual event w/ an extraordinary number of entry categories: feature narrative, feature documentary, educational/informational, animation, autobiographical, experimental/structural, experimental/imagist, social/political & super 8/young media artists. 40 features were screened in '86 w/ 9 in competition. Golden Athena Award winners incl. Trinh T. Minh–Ha for *Naked Spaces: Living Is Round*; Beth Brickell for *Summer's End*, Mira Nair for *India Cabaret* & Gary Moss for *Old Dry Frye*. Michael Powell was on hand to present a retrospective of his work. Also present were Manny Kirchheimer & Yvonne Rainer. Deadline: mid–March. Format: 16mm, s–8, 8mm (1/2" & 3/4" video OK for preselection). Fee: $10–65 depending on length. Contact Ruth Bradley, Director, Athens Center for Film & Video, Box 388, Athens, OH 45701; (614) 594–6888.

ATLANTA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 13–17, GA. 11th annual festival organized by IMAGE Film/Video Center, in association w/ High Museum of Art. About 40 works were shown in '86 out of 250 entries. Cash prizes went to Matthew Geller's *Everglade City*, Seth Krasowitz's *Make the Dust Fly*, Louis Hock's *The Mexican Tapes* & Chip Lord, Branda Miller & Antonio Muntadas' video *Media Hostages*. 1987's film judges Loni Ding & Bob Doyle & video judges Skip Blumberg & Alison Gregorson will award $4000 in prize money for dramatic, experimental, documentary & animation. Formats: 3/4", VHS, Beta, s–8 & 16mm. Fees: $25 for individuals, $135 for production companies. Deadline: Feb. 13. Contact IMAGE Film/Video Center, 75 Bennett St., Ste. J2, Atlanta, GA 30309, attn: Robin Reidy; (404) 352–4225.

BALTIMORE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL/INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER COMPETITON, April 2–26, MD. Out of 125 films submitted for the competition at the '86 festival, 16 received cash prizes ranging from $50 to $300. According to festival director Brent Berwager, winners screened at Baltimore Museum of Art. A selection goes on to AFI and the Smithsonian–Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, DC. Enoch Pratt Free Library also purchases some festival films. '86 winners included Ken Burns' *The Statue of Liberty*, Karen Agua & Jeanee Redmond's *Yours for the Taking*, Beth Brickell's *Summer's End*, Tony Cookson's *Ringers* & Steve Schechter's *The Home Front*. Categories: documentary, animation, dramatic & experimental, all up to 90 minutes. Format: 16mm only. Fee: $25. Deadline: Jan. 15 for entry forms, Feb. 2 for films. Contact Helen Cyr, BIFF–18, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Audio–Visual Dept., 400 Cathedral St., Baltimore, MD 21201; (301) 685–4170.

BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Mar. 21–28, AL. 150 prizes awarded to best works in 12 categories, plus $400 best of film, $400 best of video & $1000 best of festival awards. Categories: Americana, applied & performing arts, business & industry, early childhood, energy/environment, health/physical education, human relations, language arts, math & science, social sciences, the atypical & the aged, independent & student productions, teacher & career education. Format: 16mm & 1/2" video only. Deadline: Feb. 1. Fees: Before Jan. 20, $25 for works up to 30 mintues & $40 for longer ones. After January 20, $30 & $50. Contact Margaret Miller, Birmingham International Educational Film–Video Festival, Alabama Power Company, Box 2641, Birmingham, AL 35291–0665; (205) 250–2550.

SAN FRANCISCO ART INSTITUTE NATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 13–15, CA. The annual student–run showcase, now in its 9th year, has established reputation for giving "exposure to the best of recently produced, artist–made cinema from around the world." Emphasis on experimental work & animation. Out of 150 entries last year, 22 were shown & 12 received awards. Number of awards depends on number of entries. $1500 in cash & service prizes will be awarded by '87 festival judges Vincent Grenier, Larry Gottheim & Barbara Hammer. Among last year's prize winners were Shizuko Fukuyama's *Windscape October*, Paul Glablicki's *Film–Wipe–Film*, Marjorie Taylor's *Stop* & Guy Shervin's *Messages*. Deadline: Feb. 6. Formats: s–8, 16mm, up to 35 mins. Fee: $15. Contact Holly Everill & Ann Wysocki, San Francisco Art Institute National Film Festival, 800 Chestnut St., San Francisco, CA 94133; (415) 771–7020.

SEATTLE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, May 14–June 8, WA. Now in its 11th year, this festival prides itself on its noncompetitiveness, audience orientation, the fest directors' taste in international art cinema & their commitment to US documentary tradition. Public votes for Golden Space Needle Awards. '86 American independent films incl. Mark Rappaport's *Chain Letters*, Glenn Petrie's *Belizaire the Cajun*, D.A. Pennebaker & Chris Hegedus' *Dance Black America* &

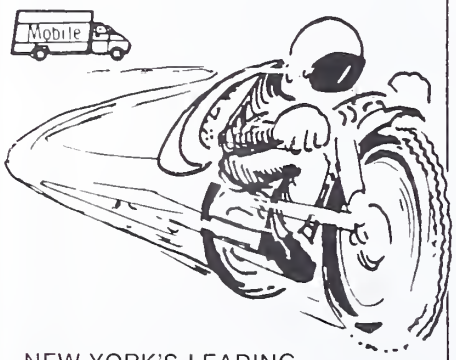
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3 films by Robert Mugge. Festival hosts "Discovery Weekend" to promote independent films w/out distributors, but all–expenses–paid invites extended to a select few. Deadline: Mar. 6. Format: 16mm & 35mm, but 35mm preferred (3/4" & 1/2" OK for preselection). 60 min. minimum for features, 20 min. maximum for shorts. No fee. Contact Gary Tucker, Seattle International Film Festival, Egyptian Theatre, 801 E. Pine St., Seattle, WA 98122; (206) 324–9996.

USA Film Festival, Apr. 9–13, Dallas. The 16th annual event drew on 220 submissions for its short film/video competition, which is combined w/ an invitation–only "discovery showcase" & Hollywood & European premieres. $1000 cash prize goes to the winner in each category. '86 feature winners were Robert Gardner's *Forest of Bliss* & Bill Sherwood's *Parting Glances*. Maureen Silwood's *The Rug* took the award for animation, Julie Akert's *Not Just Garbage* won for documentary short & Trent Harris' *The Orkley Kid* received the prize for narrative short. Deadline for film/video competiton: Feb. 12. For feature selection, contact festival ASAP. Format: 35mm, 16mm & 3/4" video (1/2" OK for preselection). Shorts up to 40 min. accepted. Fee for shorts: $30. Contact Richard Peterson, Artistic Director, or Diane Brandon, Program Director, USA Film Festival, 2909–B Canton St., Dallas, TX 75226; (214) 744–5400.

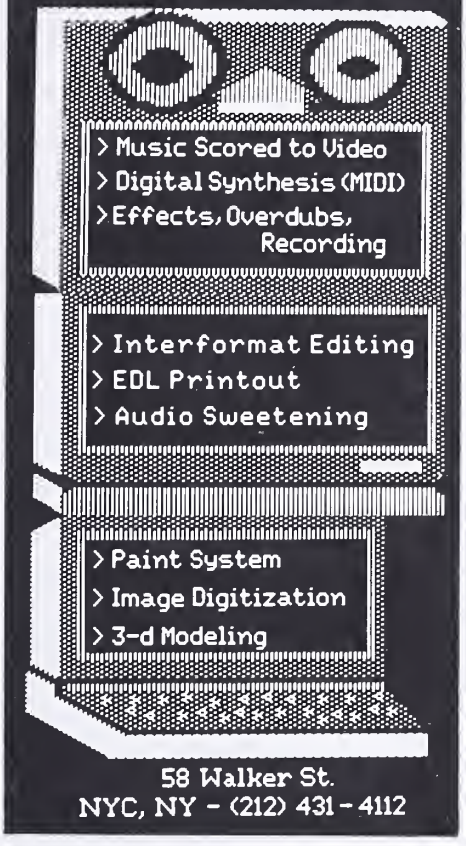
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Cartagena International Film Festival, June 19–26, Colombia. US contact Christiane Roget says the recent collaboration between festival management & FOCINE, Colombia's film institute, accounts for an improvement in the event's organization. Major distributors w/ offices in Latin America were on hand, together with France's Gaumont (a big festival supporter, according to Roget) & Impala Films of Spain. Noncompetitive video categories at the '87 festival will be numerous & varied, says Roget. The '87 festival will host contemporary African cinema sidebar & Glauber–Rocha restrospective. To avoid confusion, fest recommends that all invitations & accomodations be confirmed in advance *in writing*. Roget arranges discount travel pkgs. Deadline: end of March. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", 3/4" & 1". US contact is Christiane Roget, Cartagena International Film Festival, c/o Roget & Associates, 1890 Brickell Ave., Miami, FL 33129; (305) 856–1911. Special LA contact is Jonathan Sarno, 8959 Wonderland Ave., Laurel Canyon, CA. In Colombia, contact Victor Nieto, Cartagena Film Festival, A.A. 1834, Cartagena, Colombia; tel. 42 345.

Festival of American Independents, July, London. Held at National Film Theatre & sponsored by the British Film Institute. Programming director Sheila Whitaker is seeking fiction & documentary feaures & shorts. Deadline: Feb. Format: 16mm & 35mm. Submit VHS or 3/4" video for preselection. Contact Programme Director, National Film Theatre, South Bank, London, SE1 8XT UK; tel. 01–437 4355; telex: 27624.

Latin American Festival, June, London. Program director Sheila Whitaker seeks film & video work relating to Latin America. Deadline: Jan. Submit VHS or 3/4" video for preselection. Contact Programme Director, National Film Theatre. South Bank, London, SE1 8XT UK; tel. 01–437–4355; telex 27624.

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***The Flapper Story*, Lauren Lazin's social history film, portrays more than the fun and frolic of the Roaring Twenties.**
Courtesy filmmaker

Renee Tajima

What happens when New York playwright Edward Albee is transplanted to the backwoods of Oklahoma to "make theater"? In **A Portrait of Albee,** filmmaker Mark Brice follows the Pulitzer Prize-winning author to Tahlequah, Oklahoma, as he directs students in two of his one-act plays. Albee, best known for *Whose Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, has said, "The American theater is most alive not on Broadway, but in regional theaters and on university campuses." Despite the improbable venue of Tahlequah, Albee demands professionalism from all his students, as he becomes a character in the drama both on and off stage. Brice's work-in-progress has already been screened as a rough cut at Houston's Rice Media Center. *A Portrait of Albee*: Mark Brice, 6601 Harbortown #1706, Houston, TX 77036; (713) 779-4343.

A lifelong resident of Michigan, Ron Teachworth stayed home to produce his first feature, **Going Back,** the chronicle of an end-of-innocence road trip. Set in 1964 to the strains of early Beatles music, *Going Back* follows two college-bound youths, Brice and Clee, on a summer hitchhiking trip through rural Michigan. Fired by fantasies of seedy glamour and a dog-eared copy of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road,* the journey ends quietly on the dilapidated farm of Jack, a genial handyman. There Clee finds a father figure in his host, and Brice finds romance with a local farm girl. Four years later the two men try to recapture the summer of '64. Teachworth, a teacher and graphic artist, invested four years and thousands of dollars to make *Going Back*. He cast friends and students and set up locations at his parent's hometown of Cass City for eight days of shooting in 1982. The film was completed with the help of a small grant from the Michigan Council on the Arts and has since appeared in Detroit area theaters and festivals. This month, *Going Back* will be released on home videocassette by Vestron. *Going Back:* RST Productions, 524 Wilcox, Rochester, MI 48063; (313) 651-2578.

The nuclear reactors of the Savannah River Plant in Aiken, South Carolina, have been dubbed "four Chernobyls waiting to happen." Three-quarters of the nation's most radioactive military waste is stored in the deteriorating tanks of the nuclear weapons facility there, threatening permanent contamination in the area. Long before the devastating accident near Kiev, producer Mark Mori began to document the moral and environmental implications of weapons production in the southern U.S. Principal photography has already been completed on the one-hour film. Armed with a $10,000 grant from the Beldon Fund, Mori is now in completing editing of the project. **Building Bombs**: Mark Mori, Box 5202, Station E, Atlanta, GA 30307; (404) 627-2485.

In her new half-hour documentary, **Drive-In-Blues**, Jan Krawitz celebrates the last picture show for movie-goers on wheels. Richard Holingshead invented the first drive-in in 1933 for a nation infatuated by the automobile. For half a century, the drive-in served as a mecca for families and restless teenagers alike. Its popularity peaked in 1957, when 5,000 drive-ins lit the American roadsides. Today the "passion pit with pix" is a thing of the past. Krawitz received grants from the Southwest Alternative Media Project, Texas Commission on the Arts, and the University of Texas at Austin, to document the life and decline of the drive-in. Interlaced with unusual archival trailers, the film swings between camp and nostalgia, featuring the music of popular hits like the Beach Boys' "Drive-In" and the more obscure sounds of "Take Your Girlie to the Movies If You Can't Make Love at Home." *Drive-In Blues:* Jan Krawitz, Direct Cinema Ltd., Box 69589, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 656-4700.

Traveling through Eritrea under cover of darkness in a Land Cruiser, donated by the relief project Band Aid, videomaker Yvan Patry led a crew to document wartime conditions and relief efforts in areas controlled by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front. Producer Eddie Becker and crew improvised the Betacam unit to meet the technical demands of shooting covertly and at night. The Land Cruiser was modified to power a 30 volt light system, and to recharge the deck and camera batteries. Because of the danger from aerial attack, large solar cell battery chargers were ruled out, but smaller solar cells were used to recharge batteries from flashlights, radios, tape recorders, and a wireless Iso-tip soldering gun. The camera was detached from the Betacam recorder, and Becker remounted the audio controls and metering system on the top of the deck. The crew later returned under Ethopian authority, to document the war from the opposing side. Portions of the tape have already been broadcast on Canadian television and the *CBS Nightly News*. V.P.S., 1844 Mintwood Pl., N.W., Washington, DC 20009; (202) 332-1000.

With the aid of a visual arts fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, Slawomir Grunberg is producing a three-part television documentary series entitled **The Right to Die—The Right to Live.** The series looks at three controversial issues; the "living will" document that gives an individual the right to be kept off life support equipment, a child with AIDS, and abortion rights. Grunberg, a visiting assistant professor in the Media Department at Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri, began the project in 1985. The first segment on the "living will" has been completed, and editing work continues on the *Kids with Aids* program. *The Right to Die—The Right to Live:* Slawomir Grunberg, Webster University, 470 E. Lockwood, St. Louis, MO 63119; (314) 968-6923.

The Flapper Story, which takes a provocative look at the "new woman" ideal of the roaring twenties, was presented on national public television last month by KCET-Los Angeles. The film mixes interviews and archival footage to trace the historial events that gave shape to the figure of the flapper, exploring the ways in which flappers rebelled against prevailing social mores and considering the contradictions that simmered under the surface of this newly won independence. Lauren Lazin produced *The Flapper Story* as part of her masters project at Stanford University and went on to earn a Student Academy Award and a screening at the New Directors/New Films series at the Museum of Modern Art. *The Flapper Story:* Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, Ste. 802, New York, NY 10019; (212) 246-5522.

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The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy • Rent • Sell," "Freelancers," & "Postproduction" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$15 per issue.** Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced, & worded exactly as it should appear.

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For an application, write Ethan Young, Membership Services, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012.

NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., January 8 for the March issue. Send notices to Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Films • Tapes Wanted

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION seeks a variety of short subject videotapes & films under 15 mins for showcase series produced in Broooklyn 5 times/yr. Contact Laziza, Box 154, New York, NY 10012; (718) 797-3116.

ATTN: Municipal cable programmer looking for interesting videos, 28 mins. in length for cablecast series. Send 3/4" copy w/ brief history to Channel L Working Group Inc., 51 Chambers St., Rm. 532, New York, NY 10007.

INNOVATIVE HOME VIDEO MAGAZINE seeks short films & videos. Comedy, video art & documentary shorts. 1-8 mins. considered. Send VHS or 3/4" cassette only to *Overview*, 50 N. La Cienega Blvd. #204, Beverly Hills, CA 90211. Incl. SASE for tape return. Allow 6-8 wks for response.

INTIMATE TECHNOLOGIES: UCVideo Electronic Arts Gallery will present "Intimate Technologies," a group exhibition of works that depend upon the human presence for their activation. Curated by Barbara O'Brien. Works may incorporate wall and/or floor area, but may not exceed the use of 48 sq. ft. of floor space. No min. space requirement. Exhibition will run from Apr. 4-25, 1987. Participants will be awarded honorariums of $150. Deadline for proposals: Jan. 15. Contact UCVideo, 425 Ontario St., SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 627-4444.

NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS seeks videotapes & films for the 4th installment of "Mixed Signals," a series of 4 half-hour programs distributed to cable TV operators in New England during spring 1987. Max. length 28 mins.

DISTRIBUTOR SEEKING FILMS: Representative of small & third world countries seeks completed, feature length films: action/adventure, suspense, thriller, murder mystery & mild horror. Contact JED Int'l Ltd., 701 Seventh Ave., Ste. 9W, New York, NY 10036; (212) 330-0748.

Conferences • Workshops

NEWARK MEDIAWORKS begins its 2nd season of inexpensive video classes & training workshops: "Introduction to Video Production & Video as a Tool To Save Time & Money," Jan. 13-Feb. 3, 1987; "How Media Works: Animation By Independent Producers," Jan. 15, 1987. Also, low-cost rentals of quality video equipiment to individuals & community groups. Contact Newark MediaWorks, Box 1716, Newark, NJ 07101; (201) 690-5474.

DOCUMENTARY FILM PROGRAM at the Anthropology Film Center, spring semester Jan. 12-May 5, 1987. Carroll Williams' Production Lab provides technical & theoretical bases for 16mm film production. Also advanced seminars & tutorials. Cost of 9–mo. program, $7500. Tuition incl. books, materials, processing & use of equip. Contact Admissions, Documentary Film Program, Box 493, Santa Fe, NM 87504-0493; (505) 983-4127.

PRESENTER TRAINING & TRAVEL FUND: The Mid-Atlantic States Arts Consortium will now provide subsidies to performing arts presenters to attend regional workshops, conferences & showcases outside the presenter's state. Eligibility: nonprofit, based in the mid-Atlantic region & present at least 3 performing arts touring events during the year. Presenters may apply for half of the travel & registration costs up to $200, no later than 8 wks before the event. Contact Mid Atlantic States Arts Consortium, 11 E. Chase St., Ste. 1A, Baltimore, MD 21202; (301) 539-6656.

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IN THE FIRST ISSUE, WINTER 1986:

Dudley Andrew	Film and Society: Public Rituals and Private Space
Donald Richie	Viewing Japanese Film: Some Considerations
William Rothman	Hollywood Reconsidered: Reflections on the Classical American Film
Michitaro Tada	The Destiny of Samurai Films
Shao Mujun	Chinese Film Amidst the Tide of Reform
Wimal Dissanayake	Art, Vision, and Culture: Satyajit Ray's Apu Trilogy Revisited
John Charlot	From Ape-Man to Space-Baby: *2001*, An Interpretation
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Resources • Funds

SOUTHEAST MEDIA FELLOWSHIP AWARDS: Production grants of up to $5000 for new works or works-in-progress & Equipment Access Grants made avail. from the South Carolina Arts Commission. Eligibility: ind. film & videomakers living in 10-state region of AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN & VA. Deadline: Feb. 2. Contact SEMFP, c/o Appalshop, Box 743, Whitesburg, KY 41858.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION grant deadline for Community Organizations: January 15, 1987. Contact SCAC, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING Open Solicitations deadlines: Jan. 9, 1987 & May 1, 1987. Contact CPB, Program Fund, 1111 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

FILM BUREAU: Grants avail. to nonprofit NYS–based organizations for state exhibition programs. Supports a wide variety of programs, from annual film fests to special screenings at local libraries, galleries & community centers. Matching funds of up to $300 avail. for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Priority given to organizations showing works by independent filmmakers and/or films not ordinarily avail. to the public. Deadlines: Jan. 15, June 15, Aug. 15. Contact Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

VISUAL ARTISTS FELLOWSHIPS for 1987 will be awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts in the New Genres category, which incl. video. Deadline: Jan. 15, 1987. Contact Visual Arts Program/Fellowship Guidelines, NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 682-5448.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING: The Program Fund & Education Unit of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting seeks proposals to plan a "highly innovative approach to weekend children's programming." Submissions should describe research & planning activities necessary to design a new programming effort targeted at children 6-12 yrs for probable use by public TV stations. Independent producers, & public TV stations & agencies may submit proposals. Deadline: Jan. 16, 1987. Contact Pat King, Operations Mgr., Program Fund, CPB, 1111 Sixteenth St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

RETIREMENT RESEARCH FOUNDATION Nat'l Media Awards for 1987 will now be administered by the Center for New Television. Cash prizes offered to outstanding films, videotapes & TV programs on issues related to aging. Deadline for entries: Feb. 1, 1987. Contact Nat'l Media Awards, CNTV, 11 E. Hubbard, Chicago, IL 60611.

RISCA MINI-GRANT PROGRAM to nonprofit organizations for up to $1000 in matching funds. Deadline: Mar. 1 1987. Contact Estelle Verte, Grants Coordinator, Rhode Island Council on the Arts, Mini-Grant Program, (401) 277-3880.

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS: Proposal deadline for all programs, incl. Film, Television/Media & Special Arts Services is March 1. Contact NYSCA, 915 Broadway, New York, NY 10010.

THIRD WORLD PRODUCERS PROJECT: The Film News Now Foundation provides 1-on-1 consultations in all aspects of film & video production, fundraising, distribution, etc. Priority is media by people of color, also women & producers of social issue media. Limited number of fiscal sponsorships offered. Send written project description to Renee Tajima (docs, video) or Christine Choy (dramatic). Film News Now, 335 W. 38th St., 5th fl., New York, NY 10018; (212) 971-6061.

Opportunities • Gigs

INDEPENDENT PRODUCER/DIRECTOR looking for feature-length script. Comedy or love story, rural backdrop preferred w/ gay leads. Not interested in erotica scripts or coming out stories. P.o.v.s desired. Simple plot w/ extensive character development. Send treatment or script to Centaur Prod., Box 504, 3078 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

ARTISTS RESIDENCIES: 1-2 week residencies avail. Incl. use of facilities, AV equipment, housing & stipend. Deadline: Jan. 30, 1987. For app. write Real Art Ways, Box 3313, Hartford, CT 06103.

NEW IMAGE PROCESSING AIR: Film/Video Arts announces a new artist-in-residency program in image processing. Artists will be awarded 1-3 wks access to F/VA's Video Synthesis Studio & Sandin Image Porcessor at no charge. Applicants should have previous experience in related techniques. Those unfamiliar w/ F/VA's studio will be trained as part of their residency. Apps. accepted on an on-going basis. Residencies will take place in 3 cycles: winter, spring & fall. Write F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY

TECHNICAL INTERN sought for ongoing weekly event. Send resumes to Laziza Videodance & Lumia Project, Box 154, New York, NY 10012; (718) 797-3116.

WANTED: DP for low budget feature film shot in 16mm & b/w on location in western MA. Send resume to Open Circle Prods, Box 1155, Northampton, MA 01061.

TENURE TRACK FACULTY POSITIONS: The Univ. of Wisconsin is soliciting apps. for 2 tenure-track faculty positions w/ research & teaching covering theory & social cultural effects of the media or media institutions & history; Asst. prof. in Telecommunications in the area of media prod. App. deadline: Jan. 15. Send inquiries & apps. to Joseph N. Cappella, Dept. of Communication Arts, 6110 Vilas Hall, Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53706.

CALL FOR PROJECTS: Audio artists are invited to apply for studio prod. time to complete a new work. Up to 12 residencies avail., which incl. access to prof. audio studio, full time engineer, tape & other materials needed for project. Radio projects welcome. Deadline: Jan. 10, 1987. Write Carol Parkinson, Harvestworks, AIR Program, 16 W. 22nd St., New York, NY 10010; (212) 206-1680.

THE ASIA SOCIETY seeks films for upcoming series of docs & shorts on Asia & Asian Americans during March. Contact Somi Roy, Film Program Coordinator, Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., New York, NY 10021; (212) 288-6400.

EDITOR: Highly experienced editor needed for promotional sales & industrial programs. Must have 5 yrs experience & demo reel to show. Call (212) 864-5166.

WANTED: Man to teach basic video to imprisoned youth. PT paid position that will incl. video instruction, asst. theater & circus arts instruction & adm. activities. Possibility of work on video docs. Developmental positon w/ many potential opportunities. Resumes to Sidewalks of NY Productions, Box 968, Old Chelsea Sta., New York, NY 10113.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE at Real Art Ways, a New England regional center for new & experimental works. PT position for gallery preparation & FT music curator. Write to Director, Real Art Ways, Box 3313, Hartford, CT 06103.

Publications • Software

TAKING CHARGE: *Management & Marketing for the Media Arts*. Workbook designed for small & mid-sized organizations & ind. producers. Practical info on marketing, direct mail, promotion, press, time management, organizational development & fundraising. Price: $25, nonmembers; $15, members; plus $2.50 postage & handling. Send checks, payable to Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

Trims & Glitches

KUDOS to Benajmin Shapiro, whose radio series *The Independent Eye: American Independent Filmmakers* features profiles of Wayne Wang, Les Blank, Maureen Gosling, Julia Reichert & James Kleinhas, aired on about 70 public radio stations this year & has received an award from the Nat'l Federation of Community Broadcasters.

CONGRATULATIONS to Steve Okazaki, 1 of 3 winners of the 1986 James D. Phelan Award in Filmmaking.

EL SALVADOR MEDIA PROJECT, an organization of Salvadoran media activists in the United States, is calling for contributions to support postproduction of the Sistema Radio Venceremos (El Salvador) film *Look At My People, How They Struggle*. El Salvador Media Project, 335 W. 38th St., 5th fl., New York, NY 10018.

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LEO DRATFIELD 1918-1986

A pioneer of independent film distribution and a tireless organizer of the community, Leo Dratfield died on November 22. For nearly 40 years, Leo fought to bring independent film into theaters, public schools, and libraries. His company Contemporary Films was one of the first to distribute student films, including the early work of Shirley Clarke, Martha Coolidge, John and Faith Hubley and Martin Scorcese. Countless filmmakers benefited from his encouragement and kindness, as well as his organizational efforts. At the time of his death he had recently been elected to AIVF's Board of Directors. We will miss him.

FESTIVAL ENTRY

AIVF's welcomes our new Festival Bureau director, Kathryn Bowser, former assistant director of the Mozambique Film Project and most recently, administrative director for the United Nations Mission of the Republic of Vanuatu. With experience in both film production and international diplomacy, she joins our staff uniquely qualified to help independents through the travails of the festival circuit. She'll also be contributing to the "Festivals" column in *The Independent* and handle AIVF's Information Services.

THE APPLE OF OUR EYE

This issue of *The Independent*, the first number in our tenth volume, is the first to have been produced on Macintosh computers. Having been introduced to word-processing last spring, *The Independent*'s publisher and editorial staff quickly realized the advantages of using computers in publishing. Inspired both by advances in software for graphics and layout and David Leitner's article on the myriad applications of Macintosh computers in our June/July 1986 issue, "A Macintosh Primer," we made the leap to diskettes and mice, laser fonts and desk accessories, Microsoft Word and Pagemaker in November. We have been admirably guided through the intricacies of programs and systems by our new art director Christopher Holme. Having weathered the inevitable experiments and mistakes made in producing this first issue electronically, we hope that AIVF members and other readers of *The Independent* enjoy the fruits of our labor.

AIVF/FIVF THANKS

The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film provide a variety of programs and services to the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, the FIVF Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearinghouse. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, organizations, and individuals:

Camera Mart, Inc. Cinema 5 Theaters; Circle Releasing Corporation; Consolidated Edison Company of NY; Du Art Film Laboratories; Eastman Kodak Company; Film Equipment Rental Co.; the Ford Foundation; Guild Theatre Enterprises; Home Box Office, Inc.; Lubell & Lubell; Manhattan Cable Television; Morgan Guaranty Trust Company; Movielab Video; National Endowment for the Arts; New York State Council on the Arts; New York State Governor's Office for Motion Picture & Television Development; Orion Classics; Rockamerica; TVC Image Technology; *Uptown*, Manhattan's Moviechannel; Valley Filmworks; the Walter Reade Organization; WNET/Thirteen.

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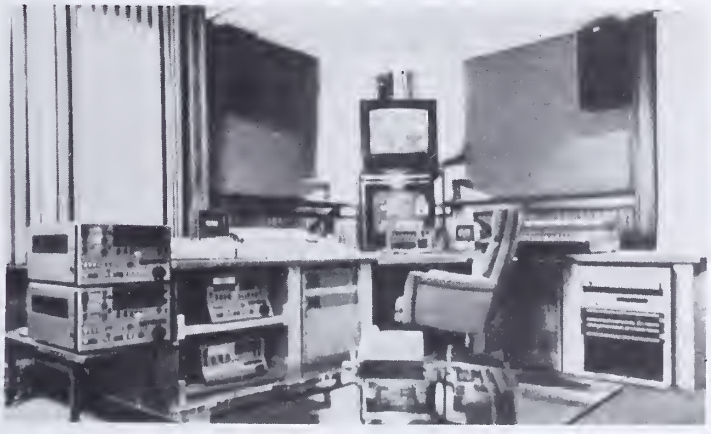
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Finished 16mm film. $4,500 awarded in cash prizes. First-place winner receives a new Nissan Sentra. SPONSORED BY UNIVERSAL PICTURES. Board of Judges: John Canemaker, Ed Hansen, Faith Hubley, Chuck Jones, Harry Love.



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The corresponding college or university of the first-place winners of the Narrative, Documentary and Animated/ Experimental Categories of FOCUS will receive $1,000 in Eastman motion picture film and video tape from EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY for their film department's use.



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COVER: *The Scarlet Empress* , Paramount Pictures' 1934 rendition of Catherine the Great's rise to power, directed by Josef von Sternberg and strarring Marlene Deitrich as the provincial German princess who became "Empress of all the Russias," is one of the 36,000 plus films now housed in the Film and Television Archive at the University of California, Los Angeles. In "The Good, the Bad, the Forgettable: The Influence of Film Archives," Edward Ball considers the complex role these institutions perform in determining cinematic history —in terms of policy as well as economics. Photo: courtesy UCLA Film and Television Archive.

BLACK CINEMA GROUP FORMS IN BAY AREA



Picture This hosted the West Coast premiere of Willy Rameau's film *Lien de Parente (Next of Kin)*, the story of a French villager in conflict with his streetwise black grandson.
Courtesy filmmaker

San Francisco's growing community of black filmmakers and video independents has a new organization, Picture This, formed last September as a consortium of "commercially oriented" black filmmakers, producers, screenwriters, and screen technicians in the Bay Area.

Documentary producer Spencer Moon (*Five Days in July*) says the group formed out of the needs and frustrations of black filmmakers needing help in finding exhibition and distribution outlets for their work. "We know there is a need for product, particularly with cable and video cassettes," Moon says. "It's a matter of getting into the pipeline; networking is vital."

The group's first project was to host the West Coast premiere of a French film, *Lien de Parent (Next of Kin)* at San Francisco's York Theatre last November. Moon said he "networked" the screening through Floyd Webb, one of the founders of Chicago's Black Light Film Festival, who recently moved to San Francisco. Black Light had given *Lien de Parente* its national debut early in 1986, but the film remains without a U.S. distributor, despite the fact that it stars the celebrated French actor Jean Marais in the role of a crusty country farmer who discovers that his only grandson is black.

"For a first event, the film was perfect for us," Moon says. "It was produced in France by a black filmmaker born in Martinique, and it's based on an American novel." Director Willy Rameau was flown to California to speak and answer questions about the production and meet with possible distributors. "He was very encouraged that a group of black filmmakers in San Francisco were reaching out to him," says Moon.

Picture This has continued its international activities through the winter, with Moon co-curating an exhibition in Germany of 15 films by Bay Area and U.S. black filmmakers that screened as part of a cinema series presented in February by Berlin's Fountainhead Dance Theater. Many of the works sent to Berlin appeared in the Black Cinema Series of the San Francisco Film Festival, also co-curated by Moon and notable as the debut screening of Spike Lee's 1986 hit feature *She's Gotta Have It*.

On the local scene, Moon says the group plans to collaborate on producing a short film, while working out the "organizational parameters" of a growing membership. For now, membership is restricted to black film professionals, but those interested in making contact with their colleagues need not be from the Bay Area. For more information, contact Picture This, 766-1/2 Hayes Street, San Francisco, CA 94102; (415) 864-2941.

MIA AMATO

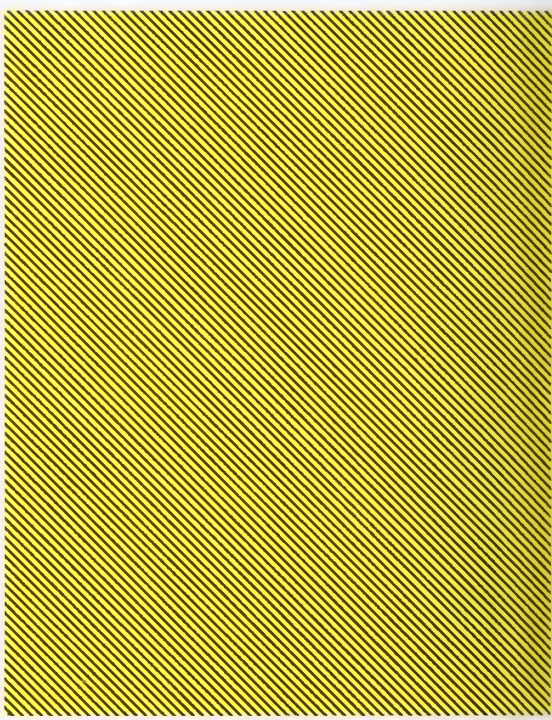
THE WONDERWORKS WORLD OF DISNEY

In what may mark the beginning of a trend in public TV, *Wonderworks*, the family-oriented dramatic series, has struck a five-year deal with the Disney Channel to share and coproduce programming. For Disney, a pay cable service received by three million viewers on 450 cable systems, the deal provides 14 titles that have already appeared on the three-year-old PTV series, U.S. premiere rights to the upcoming sequel to the Canadian saga *Anne of Green Gables*, as well as future productions, and domestic home video distribution rights. For *Wonderworks* the agreement will provide more of that ever-scarce public television resource, production capital.

According to William Lynn Wallace, *Wonderworks* project manager at WQED, which heads public television's children's programming consortium consisting of KCET-Los Angeles, KCTA-Minneapolis/St. Paul, WETA-Washington, D.C., and SCETV-South Carolina, the agreement is the first instance of a long-term co-production agreement between PTV and commercial television. "There have been one-shot deals at *American Playhouse* that have mixed public television money with commercial investment," Wallace said. "A long-term deal like this can only happen if both parties have the ability to benefit, when both walk away a winner. In this case, Disney and *Wonderworks* have the same production philosophy, the same genre in common. That makes for a good relationship."

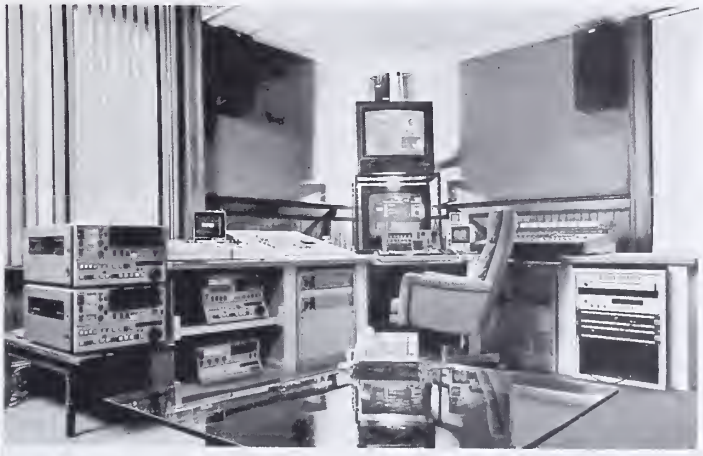
Wallace insisted that the deal would not affect the kinds of programming offered on *Wonderworks*, which has won almost two dozen programming awards and ranks as the highest-rated dramatic series on public television. "We're still looking for stories with strong characters, youthful protagonists, rights of passage." Nor would production be limited to projects developed in-house by the two entities. "We're very open to independent producers. As in the past, we'll look at shows on a case-by-case basis." He anticipates no problems with producers over assigning home video rights exclusively to Disney, explaining, "We've only assigned those rights


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Given the seemingly perennial efforts of the Reagan administration to cut public television subsidies and the hostility toward government financing of PTV often expressed by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's still influencial ex-chair Sonia Landau, the Disney-*Wonderworks* "experiment" will no doubt be watched carefully by other system producers. "Will it happen again?" Wallace asked rhetorically. "People will be looking. If this arrangement continues to be as successful as it's been in its initial phase, I can see others adopting the approach as a way to get money."

DEBRA GOLDMAN

LEO DRATFIELD: 1918-1986

Leo Dratfield, the pioneer distributor of 16mm film to nontheatrical markets, died of liver cancer on November 22 in New York City. He was 68 years old. For over 35 years, Dratfield was a tireless supporter of many activities that furthered the independent film movement. Born in 1918 in New York City, Dratfield studied briefly at New York University's School of Journalism and worked for Brandon Films. At age 18 he became branch manager of the company's Albany office, where he booked sound/slide presentations to film clubs and libraries upstate and, in the summer months, distributed films to resorts in the Catskills and Adirondacks.

After being turned down for military service in World War II, he moved to Indianapolis to work for the RCA Corporation, which, under contract to the U.S. Signal Corps, made training films for the armed forces. Later he did postproduction work for the Office of War Information and set up mobile units for the campaign in Africa. It was there that Dratfield met and worked with many of the directors and producers who later moved successfully into careers in the television and film industries.

Until the mid-1940s, the educational film market consisted of "sponsored films," produced primarily by government agencies and corporations. Excited by the explosion of independent 16mm filmmaking in the U.S. and Europe and aware of the potential education market, Dratfield set out to promote and distribute this kind of work to the burgeoning nontheatrical market. After acquiring in 1946 the Bureau of Communications Research, a company specializing in distributing sponsored films on fire safety, Dratfield, with his partners Rudi Kammerling and Jim Britain, bought the British company Contemporary Films in 1951. Through Contemporary, Dratfield was the first to introduce important short an feature-length European films to U.S. audiences, largely at libraries, colleges, and small theaters. He distributed student films by now-famous directors, such as Roman Polanski's *Two Men and a Wardrobe* and Martin Scorsese's *The Big Shave*, classic shorts such as Alain Resnais' *Night and Fog*, and animated films by Emily and Faith Hubley.

Dratfield became a fixture at European festivals and forged links between the U.S. and European film communities. By the early 1960s, the Contemporary Films catalogue had become a Bible for film librarians and educators nationwide. At Dratfield's suggestion, the Educational Film Library Association revived the defunct Golden Reel Film Festival, which had been the first and only showcase for new 16mm films, renamed the American Film Festival in 1959.

In the late sixties, Contemporary Films was sold to McGraw-Hill Films, and eventually most of the Contemporary collection was eliminated in favor of business-oriented films. Dratfield then formed Phoenix Films with Heinz Gelles and Barbara Bryant in 1973, but later withdrew from that enterprise. Since the late seventies,\Dratfield acted as consultant for First Run Features, Lucerne Films, and Films Inc., where he founded and edited its *Kaleidoscope Review*. At the time of his death he was president of the New York Film/Video Council and a board member of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers. Perhaps his best remembered accomplishments, however, were his Sunday brunches, a ritual famous in the New York independent film community.

On October 23, 1986, in a testament to his warmth and generosity, over 400 people attended a salute to Dratfield at the Museum of Modern Art. On November 13, the Donnell Media Center held a special screening of Dratfield's favorite films from the Contemporary collection, including Shirley Clarke's *Bridges-Go-Round*, Jim Henson's *Time Piece*, and John Korty's *Language of Faces*.

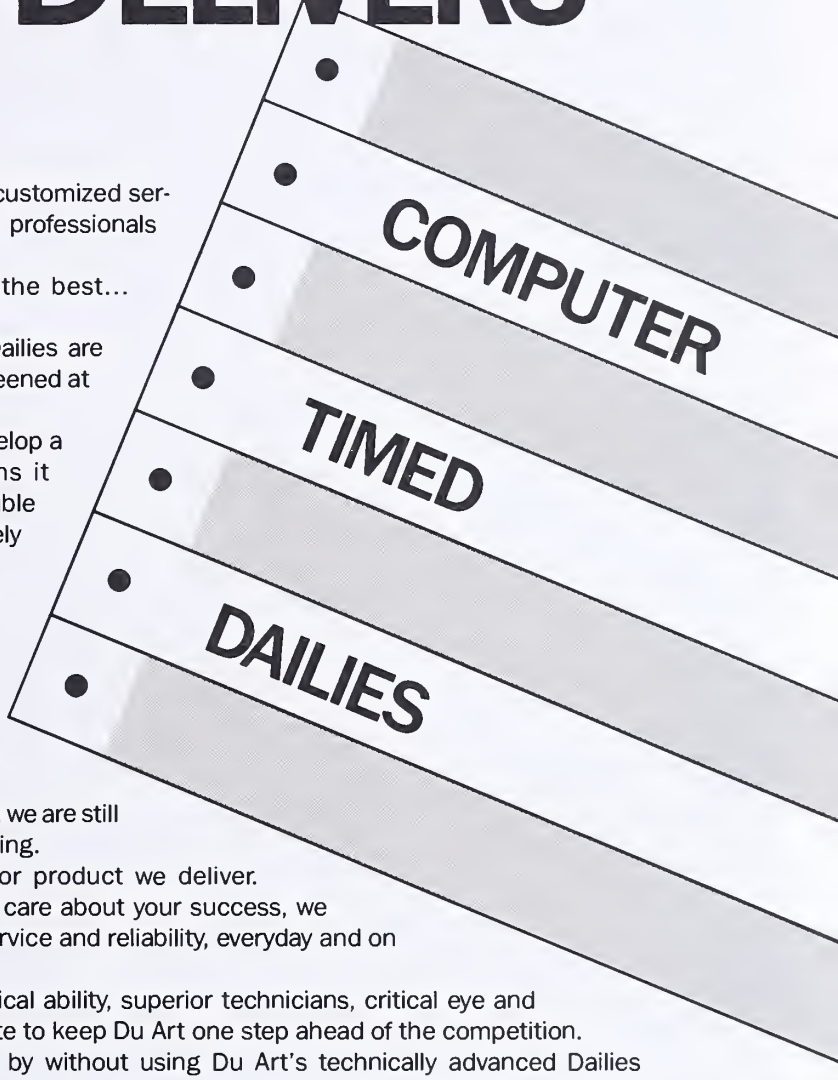
LUCINDA FURLONG

DAVID MAYSLES: 1933-1987

David Maysles, who with his brother Albert, pioneered a new form of film documentary they called "direct cinema," died of a stroke on January 3, 1987. He was 54 years old.

The Maysles brothers were among the first filmmakers to explore the use of portable, sync sound equipment developed in the early 1960s. Rejecting the illustrated lecture format then current among documentaries, the Maysles used only sound-on-film, never voice-over narration. They never interviewed, posed questions to their subjects, or shot retakes, choosing to observe rather than direct in an effort to more closely approach "the truth." Also developing a more observational style of documentary during the same period

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were Richard Leacock, Robert Drew, and D. A. Pennebaker, with whom Albert Maysles worked on *Primary* (1960), widely considered the first direct cinema film made in the U.S.

Among the Maysles' best-known documentaries are *Salesman* (1968), which follows the lives of four door-to-door Bible salesmen; *Gimme Shelter* (1970), on the Rolling Stones' U.S. tour that culminated with a murder at Altamont; and *Grey Gardens* (1976), on Edith and Edie Bouvier Beale, the eccentric aunt and cousin of Jacqueline Onassis who lived in a decaying East Hampton mansion.

At the time of David Maysles' death, the brothers had several films in progress, including two feature-length documentaries, *Fellow Passengers*, about the riders of long-distance trains, and a film on the Maysles family.

PATRICIA THOMSON

RAISING THE ANTE

Frustrated by a lack of concrete results in its meeting with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, representatives of the Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers have asked the Program Fund to respond by January 30 to several proposals for step-up funds and more production money for independents. The request came on December 10 at the regular meeting of the Coalition and Program Fund staff. Attending on behalf of the Coalition were David Bolt (BAVC, San Francisco), Frank Blythe (Native American Broadcasting Consortium, Lincoln, Nebraska), Deborah Lefkowitz (Boston Independent Film Distributors, Boston), Mark Mori (Image, Atlanta), Gordon Quinn (Kartemquin, Chicago), John Reilly (Global Village, New York), and chair Lawrence Sapadin (AIVF, New York). The Program Fund staff included director Ron Hull, deputy director Gene Katt, associate directors Donald Marbury, Jennifer Lawson, and Joshua Darsa, operations manager Pat King, and Linda Dean, assistant operations manager.

The Coalition's agenda focused on the recent trend at CPB. As public television thinks more and more in terms bigger productions, bigger names, and series formats, smaller independents producing single programs are getting squeezed out. As Lawson, associate director of drama and arts programs pointed out, PBS's schedule is aimed increasingly at "strands" of programming—read "series." WGBH-Boston's recently proposed new "strand," *The American Experience* history series, and the $24-million CPB/PBS Challenge Fund will undoubtedly bolster the future for this programming stragegy. Even the Open Solicitations process—originally conceived to counterbalance station consortia programming—increasingly goes to funding series. To protect the interests of independent productions, in light of these changes, the Coalition set three proposals on the table before the Program Fund:

Open Solicitations: Commit at least $500,000 (later revised to $1-million) in new Open Solicitations money in FY 1988, with a request for proposals directed specifically to new series formats for independent production.

The American Experience: That the Program Fund send a letter to WGBH stating CPB's policy requirement that WGBH involve independents in the planned serie, specifically, that the selection of producers be diverse and not limited to those previously associated with WGBH, and that WGBH form an advisory committee drawn from the Coalition, to advise and facilitate the involvement of independent producers. In addition, the Coalition proposed that CPB disseminate a request for proposals for work and send the Coalition the list of history scholars who are consulting on the project.

Step-Up Grants: That CPB issue a binding policy statement to PBS requiring that step-up funds be used to promote independent access to the PBS schedule, and that PBS report to CPB on the specific use of all CPB step-up funds. And that CPB reinstate $250,000 for step-ups in FY 1987 and increase its commitment to $500,000 in FY 1988.

The Coalition requested a response from the Program Fund by January 30, well in advance of the next meeting of the two groups.

RENEE TAJIMA

WRITERS GUILD FELLOWSHIPS

Two fellowship programs for New York State video writers have been established by the Writers Guild of America East Foundation. The Documentary Writers Fellowship, for applicants who have demonstrated an interest in independently produced work, will provide grants of $5,000 each for the writing and preparation of video documentaries. Another 12 to 20 fellowships will be presented to budding screen and television writers to develop a script under the guidance of an established writer. Each winner of dramatic writing fellowships will be awarded $3,500. The fellowships are funded in part by the Media Program of the New York State Council on the Arts, which has become increasingly involved in supporting re-grant programs to expand the pool of dollars going to videomakers. Contact WGA East Foundation, 555 W. 57th Street, New York, NY 10019.

RT

SEQUELS

The Making of Sun City documentary, which PBS first expressed interest in and then refused to air ["Sun City Blocked by PBS," December 1986], was broadcast in prime time by public TV station WNYC in New York City on January 21. A press release issued by the station contradicts the evaluation of the program by PBS News and Public Affairs vice-president Barry Chase, who rejected the program because he thought it promoted the careers of the producers of the Sun City record, music video, and the documentary itself. WNYC emphasized that the artists who worked on the *Sun City* project donated their time and talents and that all royalties from record sales go to the nonprofit Africa Fund, which funnels the money to South African political prisoners and their families, South African exiles, and the educational work of anti-apartheid movements. In addition to providing the public broadcast premiere of the tape, the station produced an update.

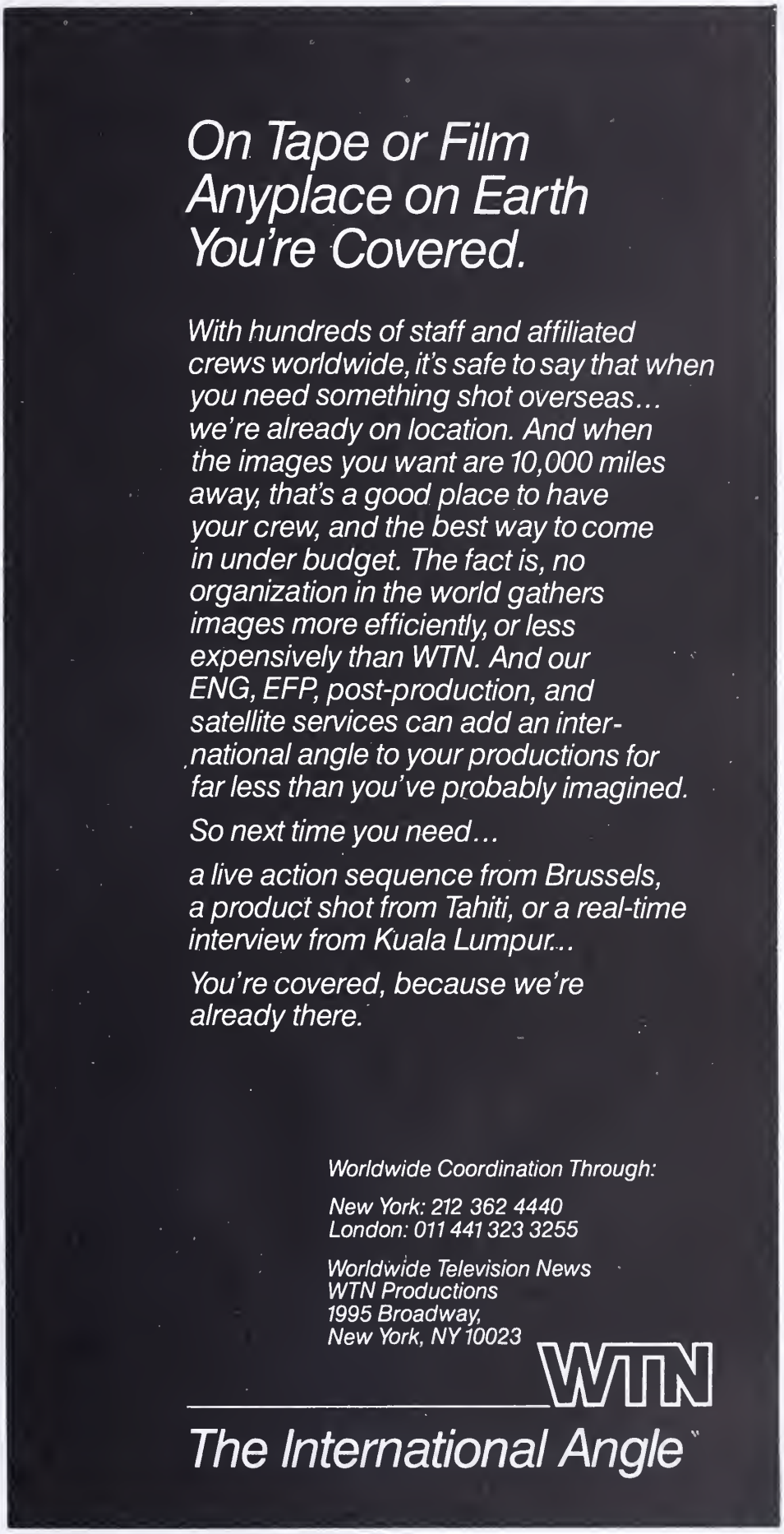
The initial report on the fate of *Sun City* on PBS contained a factual error. The International Documentary Association was misidentified as the Independent Documentary Association. Subsequent to publication, the IDA announced the winners of its annual awards, including a Distinguished Documentary Achievement Award given to*The Making of Sun City*.

□

It seems that **Filmex** has finally found a home ["Sequels," August/September 1986]. On January 13, the American Film Institute took over sponsorship of the orphaned and indigent film festival, officially known as the Los Angeles International Film Exposition. Screenings for this year's event will be held on March 11-26 at the Barnsdale Park Gallery Theater and Los Feliz Theater, with an additional marathon retrospective of Cary Grant films at the University of California, Los Angeles. Many of the selections slated for last year's aborted program will be shown this year. Ken Wlaschin survives as director of the festival.

□

The American Documentary, the proposed acquisition series featuring independent documentaries ["Package Deal: A New Documentary Series," December 1986], received $150,000 of the $265,000 requested from the CPB Program Fund. The series, which will be offered to PBS affiliates by a station consortium, is budgeted at $765,000. Marc Weiss, executive producer of the series, reported that he was conducting discussions to explore other potential sources of funding for the series. If the bulk of the financing was not secured by the end of January, Weiss said, the airing of the series, planned for this summer, may be delayed.



STRESS FACTORS: UNDERSTANDING THE NEW TAX LAW

Bérénice Reynaud

According to experts on tax laws—accountants, lawyers, financial consultants—there are no experts on the new tax bill. The Internal Revenue Service is responsibile for interpreting the new law, and they have not yet published their updated guidelines. In the meantime, accountants and attorneys are sometimes at a loss on how to advise their clients about the soundness of a given investment or the implications of some rule governing deductions. And, even when specific guidelines are published by the IRS in a month or two and the language of the regulations is elaborated, some provisions will inevitably be challenged in court. Only when court rulings occur will many aspects of the new code be clarified. However, there is one point on which everyone interviewed for this article agreed: finding money to produce, distribute, and exhibit independent films will require more homework and more pavement pounding than in the past. Before any major financial decision—ranging from making an investment in your best friend's film to launching a fundraising campaign for your organization—the advice of attorney and an accountant should be sought.

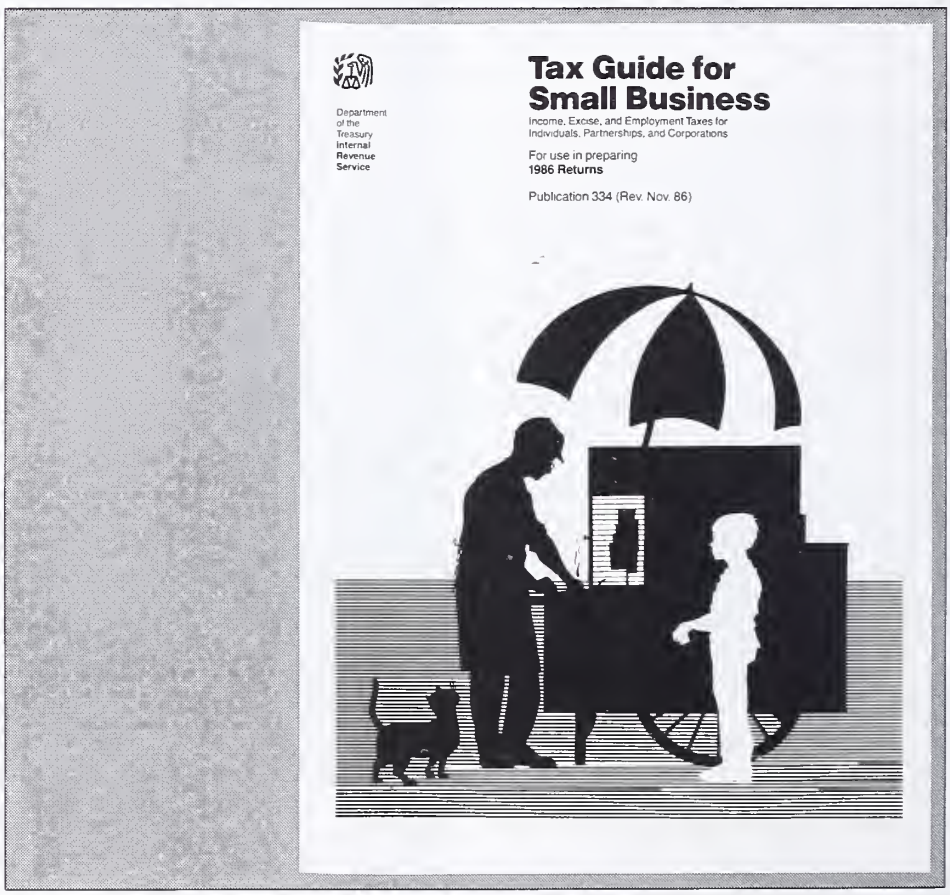
One complication of further predictions is that the law provides a transition period in 1987. Some provisions will take full effect only in 1988. On the other hand, some regulations apply retroactively and will effect taxes due next April. For the most part, though, the new tax law governs income generated in 1987. What follows is a collection of well-informed opinions designed to help you find your way in the jungle of the new regulations. This article is intended as educational and does not constitute legal advice.

REDEFINING TERMS

A *tax rate* is the percentage of income due Uncle Sam. Under the previous law there were no less than 15 rates, ranging up to 50 percent. In 1988, the number of rates will be reduced to two: 15 and 28 percent. And in 1987, a mixture of the old and new law will be in effect, with 38.5 percent as the highest rate. At first glance, since the rates are lower, it seems that individuals' less taxes will decrease. This is not necessarily so. Tax rates are based on *adjusted gross income* (AGI). AGI represents gross income minus the *personal exemption*, which has been significantly increased from $1,080 per person in 1986 to $1,900 in 1987, $1,950 in 1988, and $2,000 in 1980. But, because many tax deductions have been eliminated or pared down in the new law, greater portions of income will be subject to taxation.

The initial portion of income (recently known as the *zero bracket amount* or ZBA, but once again referred to in IRS literature as the *standard deduction*) is not taxable. And the standard deduction has been increased under the new law. For single individuals, it will rise from $2,480 in 1986 to $2,540 in 1987, and $3,000 in 1988. For a married couple filing jointly, it will climb from $3,670 to $3,760 to $5,000. What this means is that, if you're single, you won't pay taxes on the first $3,000 of your AGI in 1988. The remainder becomes *taxable income*. After 1987, individuals will pay 15 percent on taxable income up to $17,850, and 28 percent on all income above that. The *effective rate*, then, is the overall rate paid on taxable income, for example, $3,279.50 taxes on taxable income of $20,000 produces an effective rate of 16 percent. The *marginal tax rate* is the rate paid on the last dollar of income, in this case, 28 percent on the $2,150 dollars above $17,850. The marginal tax rate is important because it determines the tax benefit of deductions, which are calculated based on this rate. Tax benefits are thus reduced from a maximum of 50 percent in 1986 to a maximum of 38.5 percent in 1987 and to a 28 percent maximum in 1988.

Income reduction provisions cover direct deductions from taxable income. But the new law imposes restrictions, such as those on the deductibility of Individual Retirement Account (IRA) contributions, although a working taxpayer not covered by another retirement plan may still deduct up to $2,000. The old rule also holds for individuals whose AGI is less that $25,000 and married couples filing jointly with an AGI under $40,000. Also, in the past, certain investments in a



business venture, including film or video productions, could be used to offset income from another source. The new law puts many restrictions on that provision.

Below the line or *itemized deductions* do not constitute income reductions but apply to income tax. When they are still allowed, they will make it possible for you to deduct, at best, $28 of any $100 spent on, for example, unreimbursed employee business expenses or charitable contributions in 1988. Many of these expenses will be considered only if, *in aggregate*, they exceed two percent of your AGI.

PLAYING THE NUMBERS

Limited partnerships have enabled financing of a number of independent films, and "even the studios have depended [on them] in the past to raise money," accountant Daniel Jacobson points out. The current forms of limited partnerships vary according to state laws, but in general limited partnerships consist of selling shares to partners to cover the print and advertising costs against the first proceeds from the film. This form of financing has been considered a more secure investment than, say, underwriting principal photography. If the film made a profit, not only did investors earn money, but the deal was usually calculated so that they received a one-year deferral of income tax liability. Investments of this sort were typically made towards the end of the year and deductions taken as a loss on individual tax returns for that year. Jacobson explains that during "the next year, when box-office receipts came in and the producer was entitled to a share of the box-office, that income was distributed to the investors, and they paid taxes the following year." On the other hand, if the film didn't make a profit, losses could be deducted from the taxable income of each partner. For example, if someone invested $100 in a film venture where a 75 percent loss was reported, he or she could deduct $75 from taxable income.

These two tax advantages of limited partnerships are no longer available. "Losses from those partnerships are now called passive losses and are only usable against passive income," says Jacobson. For the IRS, *passive income* refers to income from a business or activity in which you do not "materially participate." Although there are many criteria that determine material participation in a business, the law sees limited partnerships as passive by definition, since the investors never participate in management. And *passive losses* can not offset income from salaries, interests, or dividends. The only investors who will now be able to obtain a tax write-off by investing in risky or noncommercial projects are those who have also participated in other—presumably profitable—passive investments. As a result, "the small investors, the family investors, and investor friends are going to go

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Winning an Heiress (1911).

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Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
September, 1987

San Diego Museum of Art
September–October, 1987

Detroit Institute of Art
October, 1987

Ohio State University, Columbus
January, 1988

16mm tour begins October, 1987

This traveling film exhibition is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Eugene and Estelle Ferkauf Foundation, the Arthur Ross Foundation, and the Brown Foundation, Inc., and by Hilva Landsman, Barbara Goldsmith and Frank Perry, and James Ottaway, Jr.

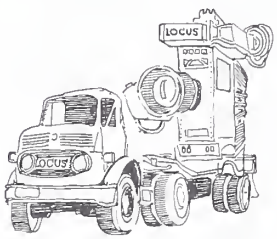
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by the wayside," attorney Ronald Finer projects. Jacobson concurs, adding, "There's going to be far less utilization of limited partnerships as financing tools for independent film producers."

The new law is also retroactive, governing tax shelters purchased before the new law takes effect. Losses from limited partnerships, no matter when these were formed, cannot not be used to offset active income. Timothy Jensen of the Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts believes that this "might increase [the investors'] desire to get out." Unlike the old provisions, however, investors are now allowed to carry losses forward and use these to offset passive income in future years. There is no time limit on what is called a *suspended loss* . For example, if partnership X loses $10,000 in 1987, and partnership Y registers a profit of $5,000, the losses in X can offset income in Y, and the remaining $5,000 can offset future passive income in 1988, '89, and beyond. Additionally, if the partnership is dissolved and the investment sold, the new law allows use of tax shelter loss to offset any kind of income, not only passive income.

Other fundraising techniques, such as public stock offerings, remain available. Jacobson predicts the creation of a few companies that will "raise money in the capital market by selling stocks and make production arrangements with independent producers in order to get product." But, he cautions, "their criteria will be very tough, and the deals that will be cut will be very tough. It's going to be harder for small independent producers to really make a lot of money out of a product." The new tax law is meant to increase rationalization of economic and financial resources, which is why the tax shelter benefits of limited partnerships was deleted. "[The IRS] doesn't want people to make an investment just because of a tax break," says accountant Alice Krause. The spirit of the new law is to encourage economically viable investments and well-measured risks on "bankable product." Many film or video projects have very little chance of classification as bankable product or of generating enough income to attract a shrewd investor. Another route for independent producers may be through nonprofit organizations able to raise money for their projects. But those tempted to take that route should be cautioned that a nonprofit that solely produces film or video must establish a "legitimate artistic, cultural or educational purpose" [see "Commercial Breaks: Profits, Nonprofits, Taxes," *The Independent*, October 1985].

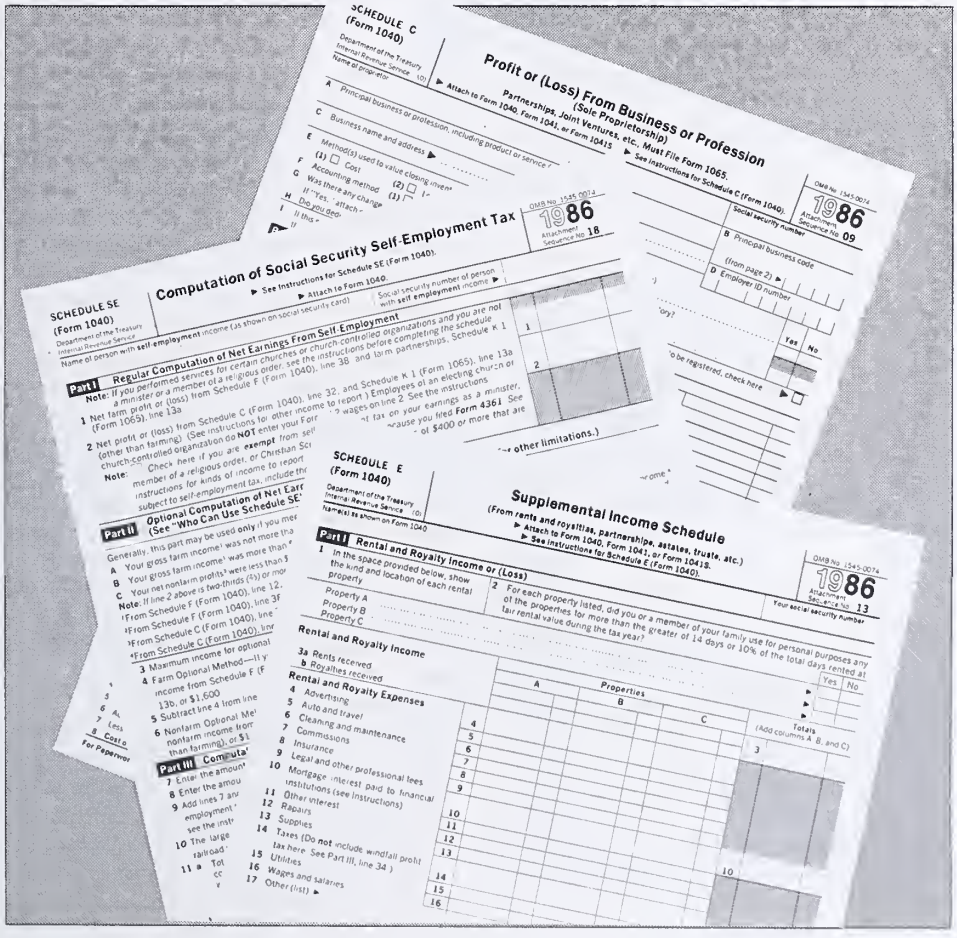
The potential repercussions of the new tax code for nonprofit organizations, the institutional base for many independent film and video production in this country, are outlined below, following a summary of the situation facing individual producers.

DIMINISHING RETURNS

Several provisions of the changed tax law could severly affect the solvency, if not the accounting practices, of independent film and video producers who claim sole proprietorship of a business. One destined to create problems is the *hobby loss limitation rule*. If film or videomaking is not the main source of income—rather than, as for many independents, the main source of expenses—the IRS might determine that the activity is a hobby and deductions for hobby expenses cannot exceed hobby income. Although this restriction has existed for many years, the statutory tests have been made more rigorous by the new legislation. A profession is differentiated from from a hobby on the basis of the professional, "businesslike" conduct of the endeavor, requiring proof of business transactions, thorough record-keeping, and the like, although proof of professional recognition of an artist enhances one's case in a dispute with the IRS. In addition, the business must show profits three out of five years, instead of two out of five allowed by the previous law, although this latter provision may be challenged in court.

Previously, the law provided for *investment tax credits*, representing 10 percent of the price of equipment purchased. This tax credit was subtracted directly from income tax, not deducted from income. This provision was abolished, retroactive to January 1, 1986. It is still possible to claim tax credit for items purchased under a contract that was binding on or before December 31, 1985, if that item was put in use prior to prescribed deadlines (ranging from January 1, 1986, to January 1, 1991, depending on the useful life of the item).

There are also significant changes in the regulations concerning the *Accelerated Cost Recovery System* (ACRS), an accounting method used to depreciate business assets over a period of time. Accountant Robert Stuart explains, "The new law lengthens significantly the useful life of an asset, so it will take longer than before to depreciate." Thus, the write-off for a given year will not be as great as in the past but can be applied over a greater number of years, e.g., the three-year depreciation period for automobiles, has been extended to five; the five year period for most equipment and machinery has been changed to seven. Film studios and other large-scale entertainment firms have used the ACRS to depreciate their film as assets over five years, although the legality of this method has been disputed by the IRS. Depreciation of film has also been calculated using a method called *income forecast*, although experts are unsure if this has been repealed under the new law. Income forecast allowed depreciation on the basis of the formula: 1986 film income divided by total projected income times total film cost equals 1986



No light matter



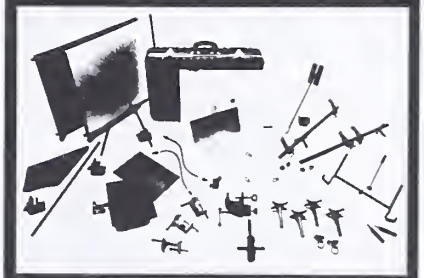
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depreciation. The figure for total income is necessarily speculative, determined by such factors as income from past projects. In the case of small firms, however, the IRS has not been known to argue the amount of a projected income.

Except for a new deduction for health insurance payments, deductions for *business expenses* will diminish. Instead of a full 100 percent deduction for entertainment expenses, including business meals, the new law allows only 80 percent. The 80 percent rule applies to meals and entertainment away from home, whereas travel related to business "in a genuine and substantial sense" remains deductible as does travel related to educational activity, as long as the travel itself is not the educational activity. The revised tax code also stipulates that "if you lose money [on a business venture], you can no longer deduct money out of your home (rent, utilities, mortgage interest, real estate taxes, etc....)," even if it houses an office or production facility. This provision was argued by the IRS for two years before Congress agreed to let them have their way. Now, a *home-office deduction* cannot exceed the net income generated by the business. However, if the deduction is in excess, it can be carried forward to offset future business income.

There's good news, however, for independents who have incorporated. The maximum rate for *corporate taxes* has been reduced from 46 percent to 34 percent, although these changes only affect corporations with taxable income above $25,000. The rate reductions are particularly significant for taxable income between $25,000 and $75,000. Up to $25,000, the rate remains 15 percent. The bad news is that the IRS seems to be cracking down on corporations created by individuals to provide "personal services," although it is not clear how this will be interpreted regarding small film and video corporations.

GIVING AND TAKING

If individual producers can expect greater difficulties operating within the new tax law, nonprofit organizations may experience more extreme effects from the new itemization rule on *charitable donations*, which may cut deeply into philanthropic funding. In 1982 Congress allowed non-itemizers to deduct charitable contributions *in addition to* their standard deduction. This provision expired in 1986. Now all deductions must be itemized. If the total of all itemized deductions is *lower* than the standard deduction, you are limited to the standard deduction. Since the rate applicable to itemized deductions depends on the marginal tax rate, the reduction of the maximum bracket to 28 percent means that a smaller portion of charitable contributions will be deductible. In 1986 a person in the highest bracket who contributed $100 to a charity was allowed a deduct $50 tax deduction; in 1988, the maximum deduction is $28 on the same contribution.

While the the new law is quite explicit on that point, experts are still debating the consequences for nonprofit organizations. According to some, the new provisions will have a very negative effect. The Independent Sector, a nonprofit watchdog group composed of 650 volunteer organizations, foundations, and corporate officers responsible for charitable giving, opposed the 1986 tax bill on these grounds. In late December 1986 Independent Sector published the findings of a survey, conducted by Harvard economist Lawrence Lindsay, that estimated that the marginal tax rate cut from 50 percent to 28 percent will cause a $4.98-billion loss for nonprofits nationwide; the elimination of non-itemized charitable deductions will create an additional $4.9-billion loss; the subjection of appreciated property to minimum tax will produce a $.99-billion loss (this provision concerns real property donations and donations of appreciable art work; previously, a painting bought for $1,000 but worth $10,000 when donated to a nonprofit institution constituted a deduction based on the appreciated value, whereas now the deduction is calculated on the original cost while the appreciated value is taxable). The survey's estimation of average income losses for nonprofits is 14.3 percent.

The survey used an economic model to compare two quantities: the income after tax and the price of giving after tax. For instance, for a taxpayer in the 30 percent tax bracket, the cost of giving $1 to a charity is $.70 It postulates "ideal economic subjects" who are going to make sound and rational decisions. But, according to financial consultant Susan Eichen, "Individuals [who make charitable contributions] are not so much motivated by tax incentives as they are by the desire to *give*." Jensen at VLA likewise observes, "The tax rate changed five times since 1920, and contributions didn't go down." In projecting the consequences of these tax changes, it's also important to analyze the profile of taxpayers who make charitable contributions. Since large donations are most affected by the new law, Lindsay's study concludes, "Charities that rely on large income donors will have a larger drop [of income]" because "the reduction in tax-rate is larger for high-income than middle-income taxpayers." In addition, Eichen observes, "Small contributors don't think about tax deductions when they make a donation."

Still, experts on nonprofit fundraising are sharply divided in their predictions. Consultant Michael Seltzer comments, "The result of these tax laws is damaging to nonprofits. But for independent filmmakers the aspect which is of prime importance is the cut in the marginal rate, because it affects one of the incentives donors have to make substantial gifts to independents." Bob Smucker of Independent Sector notes that the findings of

Lindsay's survey do not include "the efforts of organizations to try harder to raise funds." Attorney John Sloss believes, "People are overreacting when they think that the new tax law will have an adverse effect on fundraising for charities. Charitable contributions are still deductable for individuals who itemize." And Eichen points out that "charitable contributions may be less attractive than they are now, but, compared to the other alternatives under the new law, they still will be attractive, since there will be fewer tax loopholes. If an organization has a large base of support, it is less likely to be hurt. The not-for-profit sector should not panic."

Suggested reading: *The Price Waterhouse Guide to the New Tax Law*. Bantam Books, New York, 1986, $3.95 (paperback)

I would like to thank the following individuals who kindly agreed to be interviewed and to share their opinions: Douglas Burak, partner in the accounting firm of Lutz and Carr; Susan Eichen, financial consultant; Ronald Finer, partner in the law firm of Colton, Weissberg, Hartnick, Yamin and Sheresky; Daniel Jacobson, CPA, partner in Laventhol and Horwarth; Timothy S. Jensen, director of Legal Services, Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts; Alice Krause, CPA; Lawrence Lindsay, professor in the Department of Economics, Harvard University; Michael Seltzer, development and fundraising consultant to non-profit organizations, including filmmakers; John Sloss, attorney at Parker, Auspitz, Neesemann and Delehanty, vice-president of the Collective for Living Cinema; Bob Smucker, vice-president, Government Relation, Independent Sector; Robert Stuart, from Bernard Dickman's accounting firm.

On January 15, 1987, the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers sponsored a seminar, with accountants Susan Lee and Cecil Feldman discussing the repercussions of the revised tax code for independent producers. Some of the information in this article was presented at that event. The seminar was tape-recorded, and copies of the tape are available. For more information, call Ethan Young at AIVF, (212) 473-3400.

Bérénice Reynaud, a freelance critic and programmer based in New York City, is currently writing a book on independent cinema.

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WEST GERMAN SUPER 8



Karen Rosenberg

West German avant-gardists Christiane Schauder and Reinhard W. Wolf founded KOB-8 [Koordinationsbüro der 8mm-Filmemacher], a bureau for super 8 filmmakers in Mainz in 1981, and have been directing it ever since. Participants since the early 1970s in the development of West German alternative filmmaking, they moved from making their own films to producing a newsletter and running workshops for KOB-8. She paints and works as an art restorer; he writes and works as a film teacher. Given their varied backgrounds, they are particularly well-equipped to explain the tumultuous history of West German super 8 since the seventies. Most significant, they believe, is a split that developed in that era between political filmmakers and those primarily interested in film as art, a split that helped cause the breakup of earlier associations formed to promote and distribute super 8 film. Another reason for this collapse, in their view, was diminished resistance to nuclear weapons and environmental pollution in West Germany. Many political filmmakers who had produced informational and agitational works shown in community halls and pubs stopped making films. Much of their audience did not make the transition to the nonnarrative and formally demanding films made in the eighties. The social criticism of an aesthetic influenced by expressionism and punk left them cold. "And that's a bit disappointing," says Wolf. "People who were socially conscious are not necessarily culturally conscious."

At the same time, in the early 1980s, few in the new urban avant garde knew the history of super 8 in West Germany. The result was a "cultural gap," Wolf continues. "Actually, we are the only mediation point between these generations and types of super 8 filmmakers." This historical perspective and an openness to new trends clearly aided Wolf when he curated a 90-minute program of recent German independent super 8 films, which came to Massachusetts and New York City in the fall of 1986, hosted by the International Center for 8mm Film and Video. As a concession to non-German-speaking audiences, the films chosen contain relatively little dialogue or narration, but use many animation techniquesand found footage cut to music. As the following interview reveals, these visually expressive works offer a critical perspective on contemporary society.

The Winkelkotte brothers (right) entertain inside their mobile cinema-in-truck.

Photo: Reinhard Wolf

You may be led to ask how many U.S. experimental film and videomakers in their late twenties do the same?

Thanks to Toni Treadway, the Goethe Institutes of Boston and Chicago, and to Miriam Hansen for help in preparing this article. Another section of the interview appeared in issue 10 of German Politics and Society, *a journal of the Center for European Studies, Harvard University [5 Bryant St., Cambridge, MA 02138].*

□

Karen Rosenberg: Let's discuss some of the themes of recent West German super 8. I noticed a postmodern, ironic critique of the media in Christoph Doering's *Persona Non Grata* [1982]. And *useless* [1983], by "detective f.," is a pastiche of super 8 porno and fiction films, sold in department stores, and TV news clips of planes and soldiers, cut to music with lyrics like "Nothing to do...strange new toys."

Reinhard Wolf: ...and *Der Bundeskanzler*

[1982] too. It's a clip of a music group called TV-War. There was a period—it started in perhaps 1979, and it's over now—when the TV set itself appeared in many films, and material filmed directly from TV was compiled and used. It was not a conscious movement—like, "Now we'll make films against the media"—but people saw such films at festivals and liked them, and it spread. We picked those films because they were typical of the time. This program was made not only for screenings but as a kind of archive of important filmmakers and developments. Doering's film starts with a TV set in one corner of an empty room, and *Der Bundeskanzler* has a TV set on a motorway and at the Berlin Wall—almost the same framing. It was obvious that there is a connection.

Christiane Schauder: Very often filmmakers used the TV news as a background, and you hear "10,000 bombs..." and "100,000 killed...." This gives a very cold and brutal climate.

RW: A serious interrelationship between film and music is also typical. Music is used not just as soft background or to support feelings. The images are cut to the music, but both have equal importance.

CS: A lot of the super 8 films have war as the subject. Bringing nuclear weapons to Germany caused many demonstrations and a police presence in the cities. As soon as the discussion of nuclear weapons began, nobody could flee from that reality.

KR: And *Kriegsfilm* [*War Movie*], by Wolfgang Hogekamp, Tommy Christmann, and Bea Nothnagel [1984]?

RW: It has a different subject: the war in the city, war as a metaphor, the war between the state and people, between aesthetics and industrial power. The first part, called "War Dance," is cut to suggest how people are fragmented in modern society. They can't move very far; they move but stay in the same place. The next part, "War Aesthetics," is a night scene of a factory in fast motion, contrasted with the song of a nightingale, which sounds, however, like a war cry, as it was cut artificially on the tape machine. This is industrial aesthetics. And the third part, "War Film," features people armed with weapons, who are supposed to form the militant opposition, in a garage—the underground as the state fears it to be—earnestly going about its business.

KR: Underground in fact.

RW: The subject of *Persona Non Grata* is very close to *Kriegsfilm*, but more directed toward the personal.

KR: So it shows the militarization of society in a more general sense?

RW: Yes, more as a metaphor. Everybody is aggressive, fighting against one another. And people who are different—like the *persona non grata*—are isolated.

KR: Is there an attempt in this alternative cinema to deal with subjects that are taboo in mainstream film?

RW: They can be dealt with, but in a completely different way. The so-called Young German Cinema—made up of people who are now in their fifties—produces fiction films. They always personalize social problems, a strategy they might not have pursued when they started. They were not always as narrow as they are now.

CS: These super 8 films are very spontaneous, very close to what happens every day. You don't need a story to express everyday reality.

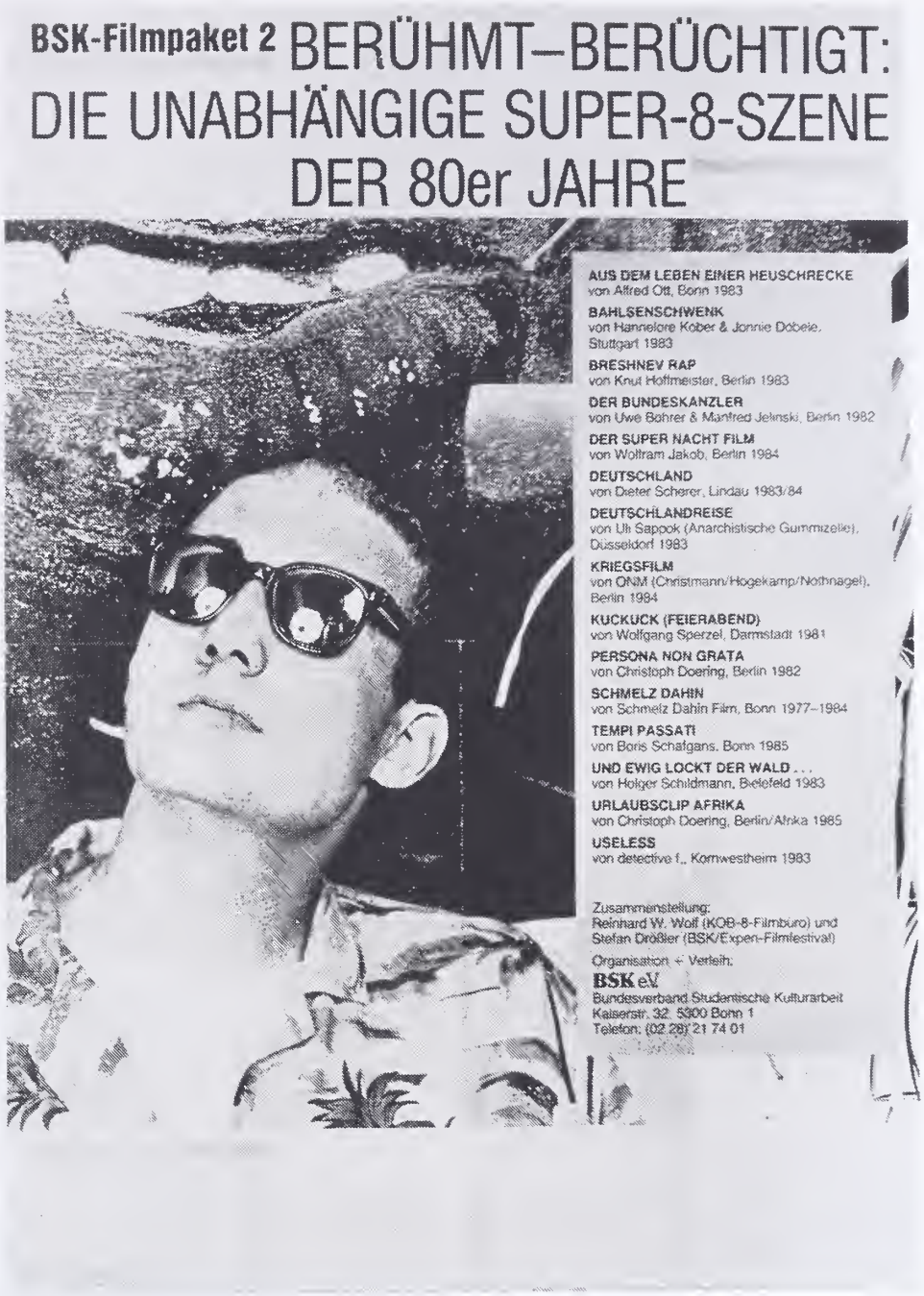
RW: I'd say they are neo-expressionist, and some are very close to the pre-war expressionist films—what we call *Caligari* films—and to the experimental works of filmmakers like Walter Ruttmann and Hans Richter, which aren't really expressionist.

KR: So they know that history. Where are those films shown?

CS: In cinémathèques, art schools, and art film theaters.

RW: I have the feeling that the German film history which was interrupted by the Nazi regime is being continued now, 40-odd years after the war. So, in a way, these super 8 filmmakers, while modern, are more conscious of German film tradition than the Young German Cinema, which is more bound to the narrative tradition of the nineteenth-century novel.

KR: Did many of them study in art schools





Reinhard Wolf (left) and Christiane Schauder (right), the cofounders of West Germany's super 8 film bureau KOB-8.
Photo: Bob Brodsky

and see pre-war films there?

RW: Definitely. Many of them are painters and musicians as well as filmmakers. Expressionist painting is even more accessible than old films.

KR: And are there multi-media events using super 8?

CS: Yes, performances using painting, music, film, and dance. Suddenly, beginning in the early 1980s, there was a kind of explosion of self-expression, especially in the big cities.

KR: Dieter Scherer's *Deutschland* [1983/4] is a filmed performance: a soldier in uniform, screaming "Deutschland," crawls, as if wounded, by a German lakeshore, disturbing strolling tourists until taken away by the police. In the U.S. video is often used to document performance art. What about in West Germany?

CS: Less. But Scherer's film is more than the documentation of a performance. The fictional aspect would have been lost if this had been merely a video documentation.

KR: Perhaps some people who might be doing video art in the U.S. would be working in super 8 in Germany. Is super 8 an important part of artistic culture in Germany?

RW: It's marginal, but perhaps less marginal than in the U.S. It's hard to count how many super 8 filmmakers there are in Germany. How do you decide who is a filmmaker and who just does a film every two years?

KR: Would most of the filmmakers in your program consider themselves filmmakers or artists in general?

CS: Artists in general.

KR: They generally don't support themselves through their artwork?

CS: Right.

KR: Why do they work in super 8 rather than in 16mm—or even 35mm—film?

CS: They don't have to fight for support. They have the equipment, so they use it. It's the quickest and cheapest way, so they try to make their work as good as possible within their means.

KR: Why don't they seek state support? Is it that they don't want to be judged by conservative aesthetic and political criteria?

RW: Some wouldn't cross the threshhold. Maybe they couldn't communicate with the bureaucratic subsidizing bodies. They wouldn't be able or want to fill out forms. And they might be too anarchistic to follow the rules.

KR: You are showing a very funny short film called *Deutschlandreise* [*Touring Germany*], made in 1983, a kind of bird's eye view of the country. Architectural details, often framed as abstract compositions, replace familiar tourist shots of major sights. We expect typical views, which never appear. The name of the production group is Anarchistische Gummizelle [Anarchistic Padded Room]. I assume that's another joke, but is there an anarchist strain in the avant garde?

RW: Not in the narrow political sense.

CS: The jokes about themselves create a bit of freedom for them. Everyone expects them to be a bit crazy, a bit anarchistic.

KR: Five of the 14 films you brought were made in Berlin. I gather that this avant garde is mainly an urban phenomenon.

RW: There is a cultural migration, not only of super 8 filmmakers but of painters as well. Some of them prefer the cultural climate of a big city, and they go mostly to Berlin. About 10 years ago it used to be Düsseldorf.

CS: And now Cologne and recently Hamburg are gaining in artistic favor.

RW: Of those people in our program who made films in Berlin, only one was born there.

KR: There's one film that you brought, made in 1983/4, that stands apart aesthetically. *Die Veränerung* [*The Change*] has no spoken words, only Romantic music accompanying documentary shots of trees, or earthmovers, and of clashes with the police.

RW: And an actor plays the punk at the end who runs through the woods and into the city, throwing stones. Another plays a policeman.

KR: What was the issue?

CS: In 1983, a big runway for the Frankfurt airport was under construction, which meant cutting down a large forest. People who had never been in any political opposition became active. And the filmmaker was involved in this anti-airport protest.

RW: There were action groups from surrounding villages.

CS: At that point old people were caught in the same situation as the so-called punks had been in the cities. It brought young and old very close together, and that's what this film expresses. Even older viewers understood that the people are only reacting to the violence of the police.

KR: Where was it shown?

CS: In public halls in municipal buildings that might also house a library and other services, for example. Such films [about a political movement or demonstration] are still shown, but not continually, only at special events.

KR: Was the filmmaker, Jochen Pollitt, one of those who tried to create an alternative information system in the 1970s?

CS: No, but *Die Veränderung* is very similar to the old films of the anti-nuclear movement, which he knew. He lives in a non-urban community that has no cinema, and for years he and his friends showed good mainstream films to the people there. He also runs an annual open-air super 8 festival in Weiterstadt. His experiences with community audiences is reflected in the style of his film.

KR: So there is some continuity between the filmmaking generations.

CS: This is an exception that has something to do with his audience. They are rural people, not very political, and he wanted to make them understand, emotionally, what is going on. It was not made for people in the metropolitan political movements; they wouldn't like that form.

KR: Besides Weiterstadt, at which other major German festivals are super 8 films screened?

RW: For nine years, there's been a super 8 festival in Bonn, whereas Berlin's is in its third year. And that reflects the old movement in West Germany and the new movement in Berlin. There's a big experimental workshop, with 16mm and video as well, in Osnabrück, and a women's film festival in Cologne, the Feminale, which shows a lot of small gauge films.

KR: If the political movements which meet and screen films in public halls are not receptive to the aesthetic of the new avant-garde films, even though, as we discussed, those films make critical political points, where are they exhibited?

RW: In normal cinemas, no chance. There are a little over 100 Kommunales Kinos [municipal, public-funded cinemas] in German towns. Their aim is to select programs according to cultural, film historical, and pedagogical criteria, and they are integrated into the cultural departments of town governments. They are *very* important to the independent film sector. Some are conservative concerning small gauge films, but some show super 8. They can pay a good fee.

CS: Though it depends how much money they get from the town—there are big differences from town to town.

RW: The next step down—or up, or whatever—is what we call "off-cinemas," which don't show big commercial films but successful art films. They don't run a film as long as people keep coming but change the program according to a fixed schedule. These off-cinemas don't show super 8. Then there are off-off-cinemas: groups who organize a cinema, maybe renting an unused cinema.

CS: ...or a factory loft.

RW: Like Eiszeit in the Kreuzberg district of Berlin.

CS: ...a tough part of the city...

RW: ...which was famous for its squatters' movement. It's close to the Wall—a proletarian area where there was a lot of real estate speculation and renovation. It's also a cultural center of Berlin. Eiszeit is in a back house—behind another house. It gets darker and darker...

CS: ...and cheaper and cheaper....

RW: I think a small factory used to be there.

KR: Are super 8 films shown in galleries and museums?

CS: In galleries, yes. A museum would show a Hans Richter retrospective, for example.

RW: ...but not contemporary films.

KR: What about cable TV?

RW: Only a few cities in Germany have cable.

CS: The cable projects were a big flop. Only about 10 percent of the people they expected to buy it did.

KR: Does the state-run television consider super 8 not broadcast quality, as is the case here?

RW: There is actually no way to get a super 8 film on a normal program. But in special program slots you can show super 8, though not very often.

CS: There is a special series with weekly programs called *Kleines Fernsehspiel* [*Small Teleplay*] on ZDF, and they show some super 8 productions. Some are coproductions, some made entirely with these funds. The guidelines for selection are being revised right now by the *Kleines Fernsehspiel* department.

RW: Three or four super 8 films were funded.

KR: When did this start?

RW: About three or four years ago.

KR: Do more super 8 filmmakers want to get TV money?

RW: Some try to, yes, more than before.

CS: But that only makes sense for a big—60- or 90-minute production. For the small and short film, it isn't worth the effort. They produce it some other way.

RW: *Kleines Fernsehspiel* has a feature-length time slot, about 90 minutes, every Tuesday. Up until now they have mostly produced films of 80, 90, or 100 minutes. But now they are considering putting together an anthology of short films. Recently, this was suggested to them at a meeting, and one of the people working there agreed to it. But, as far as I know, not much has happened.

Kleines Fernsehspiel has two main budget categories: there's the big budget film [about 200,000 DM] and the so-called "camera film" [about 120,000 DM, approximately $60,000]. But they want to do something new, to give money to filmmakers to make short films, maybe test films, which don't have to be broadcast if the results aren't as expected. Something like giving away 5,000 DM to a super 8 filmmaker to produce a 10- to 15-minute film, and if it's very good, they might take it.

CS: If not, they keep it in the archive.

KR: How else is super 8 distributed? What's this mobile cinema from Berlin—"Mirona"—that sounds so intriguing?

RW: Two or three years ago, the Winkelkotte brothers made a 90-minute super 8 film and toured with it and a projector, as many do, to pubs, to off-off-cinemas, and to artists' workspaces. They like to tour, so they bought this truck and built a cinema in it.

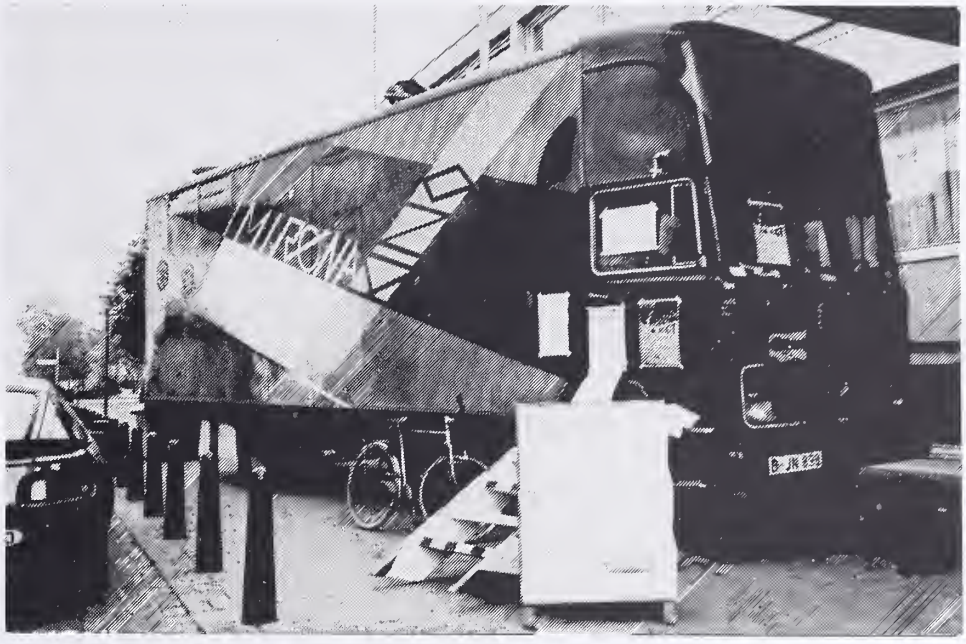
KR: How many people can fit in it?

CS: Twenty, 25.

KR: Does KOB-8 function as a distribution center?

RW: To a certain extent. We are kind of pressed into it without being able to do it, because we aren't funded. Whatever we do is on our own time. We have formed something called a Film Pool which is a kind of passive form of distribution. If people inquire, we send leaflets and the films, but we have no time for active distribution work, except for this program.

CS: ...which we send around Germany. Sometimes we accompany the films, if it's not very far to travel.



There is life after Winnebago. The Winkelkotte brothers like touring their super 8 films, so they built a screening room inside a truck, dubbed it Mirona, and took the show on the road.

Photo: Reinhard Wolf

RW: Financing the program was a risk for us because we made contracts with the filmmakers in which we agreed to pay something per minute per screening. And we bought the prints.

KR: You did this because you feel that artists should be compensated?

CS: Yes, because we used to make films when we had the time, and we think that filmmakers should get some money for their work. We got some money from a student organization, which helped pay for the prints. Our contract says that first we recover the money for the prints, and after that the filmmakers get paid.

RW: The advantage for the student organization is that the student film clubs can rent the films at a lower cost.

CS: And that's beginning now.

Karen Rosenberg is a writer whose work has appeared in Sight and Sound, *the* Nation, *the* Boston Globe, *and elsewhere.*

© Karen Rosenberg 1987

THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE FORGETTABLE

THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ARCHIVES



***Way Down East*, D.W. Griffith's film starring Lillian Gish and Lowell Sherman.**

Courtesy International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House Stills Collection

Edward Ball

Edison's Kinetoscopic Record of a Sneeze, better known as "Fred Ott's Sneeze," is a film seen by thousands of new viewers each year and a landmark in the early history of cinema. Its protagonist, Mr. Ott, could make a slightly deviant but nevertheless defensible claim to screen immortality. In 1894, "Fred Ott's Sneeze" was the first film deposited for copyright at the Library of Congress, whose film archive is today the largest comprehensive collection in the country. Always the businessman, Thomas Edison placed every frame he shot in the hands of the library, not for safekeeping but for proprietary reasons. Other pioneers of film and thousands of producers since Edison have declined to make the effort. One result is that more then half of the films shot and distributed before 1950 have been lost or destroyed. What we think of as "the cinema" is really a matter of what someone, sometime, decided to store.

Archives hold a curious but unquestionable power in film culture. They help determine what future viewers will see of current filmmaking, while the omissions in their collections testify to what has already fallen through the cracks of history. Archives house, preserve, and restore prints. They publish periodicals and catalogues. They open their doors to journalists and academics. The film curator is like a latter-day scribe, the recordkeeper of an image industry that often regards its own prolific past as a distraction from tomorrow's shooting schedule. "We collect film as document and cultural artifact, as well as for the sake of 'art,'" says Robert Rosen, director of the huge multi-media archive at the University of California, Los Angeles, which has been amassing films since the late 1960s. The acquisition decisions of an archive curator are a *de facto* judgment on what passes as memorable cinema—and what is turned aside to fall on the ash heap of history.

Two of the most important archives for independent cinema are, without doubt, Anthology Film Archives in New York City, whose collection of U.S. and foreign avant-garde work is unrivalled in the country, and the Center for Film and Theater Research at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, which has gathered a large stockpile of leftist political work among its 14,000 films. Yet, like all forms of enterprise in this country, film collecting tends toward oligarchy, and the archive domain has become dominated by a few high-profile players.

There are six major film archives in the United States at the moment: the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division of the Library of Congress (in Washington, D.C., with some 100,000 titles), the Motion Picture, Sound and Video Branch of the National Archives and Records

Administration (also in Washington, with 150,000 titles, mostly government-produced documentaries), the film archive of the University of California, Los Angeles (some 36,000 titles), the Department of Film at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City (8,500 titles), the Pacific Film Archive at the University of California, Berkeley (6,000 titles), and the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House in Rochester, New York (6,000 titles). In addition to reels of film, most of these collections have extensive radio and video holdings, as well as libraries of film publications, production information, and publicity materials. All are open to reasonable browsing and research by individuals, and all but the Library of Congress have a heavy program of public exhibition or circulation.

To independent producers working to fund and distribute their films, the behavior of film archives may seem remote and impertinent. But the argument can be made that film collections hold a certain sway even over film finance. By ignoring some genres and conferring long-term value on others, archives influence the flow of funding as well as the preferences of distributors. Especially for non-mainstream work, archives are a distant but powerful patron. "When people look back at the twentieth century, television and film will be seen as having shaped consciousness, as well as being documents of consciousness," says UCLA's Rosen. Whose consciousness? Film archives are constantly expanding their holdings, but what are they acquiring?

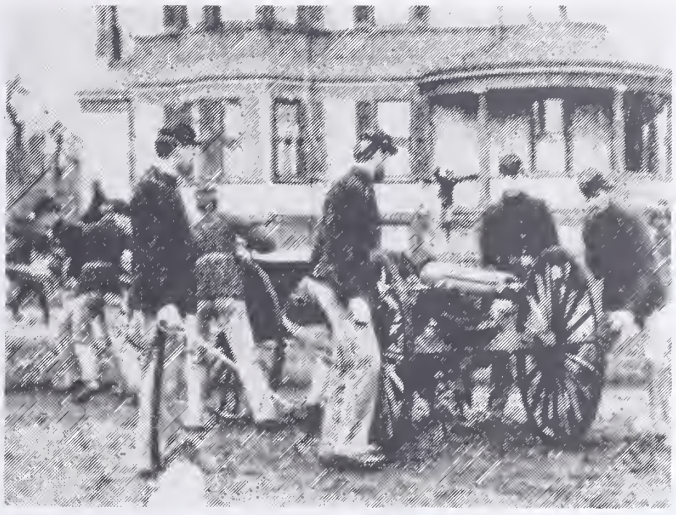
The short answer is, it depends. Jan-Christopher Horak, associate curator at the Eastman House notes, "Our archive has not bought any film for 10 or 12 years. Unfortunately, perhaps, much of our budget now goes toward transferring our nitrate film collection to acetate. We grow only by donations of prints." The situation at the Eastman House is the normal state of affairs among non-government film collections. "We don't have any money to pay for acquisition," says Shelly Diekman, publicist for the Pacific Film Archive. "Nearly all of our films were donated to us." Since budgets for acquisition are practically nonexistent, these film collections stand awkwardly outside the profit-driven U.S. film economy, sometimes acquiring prints decades after the last audience has gone home. Most archives are expanding today only through the qualified generosity of copyright holders, and what they get is often a matter of what a producer is tired of paying to keep in storage.



Gene Kelly in MGM's 1952 musical comedy *Singin' in the Rain.*
Courtesy IMP/GEH Stills Collection

At the National Archives and the Library of Congress, in raw numbers the two largest film collections in the country, things work differently. The National Archives stockpiles films that document the activities of the federal government. With the exception of a few privately-funded documentaries, this has meant films produced by the government itself. Here, then, are the wartime propaganda shorts, the hygiene films shown to schoolchildren, the New Deal documentaries of the Public Works Administration, as well as thousands of other movies covering state visits, civil service training, and the activities of the Defense Department. Altogether, the National Archives are a resource for historical research, but not a great defender of innovative filmmaking.

The Library of Congress, which is responsible for national proprietary records, has the legal right to demand deposit of a print from any filmmaker who desires U.S. copyright protection. Hollywood studios and other big-budget producers deposit a print with the library as a routine matter. Yet filmmakers with less resources often register their work for copyright with a letter of intent or by simply including the © insignia in the credits. "Many of those producers slip through the cracks," says Paul Spehr, assistant chief of the Library's Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division, referring to independent filmmakers, who often cannot afford or do not choose to deposit a print for copyright protection.



***Gatling Gun Crew in Action*, Thomas Alva Edison, 1897.**
Courtesy Library of Congress Paper Print Collection

The non-government film archives uniformly claim to want to acquire all kinds of film. Since they only grow by attracting private bequests, however, this is more a public posture than an active policy. In fact, film acquisition among such institutions has slowed down in recent years. "In the past our attitude was to cast the net very broadly, because so much material was being lost," says Rosen. "Now, we and everyone else are establishing more coherent and pointed selection criteria,



***The Yellow Girl*, Vitagraph, 1915.**
Photo: IMP/GEH Stills Collection

because of the expense of storage and the tremendous proliferation of product."

The same narrowing of acquisitions has been taken by the Department of Film at the Museum of Modern Art, which began collecting reels in 1935. "We have gone back to our original mission, which was to collect internationally," says Eileen Bowser, curator of MoMA's film archive for more than a decade. MoMA houses one of the oldest and best-respected collections in the country, and the original Film Library was established, with a kind of missionary zeal, by Iris Barry and her husband John Abbott who sought to include cinema in the museum's definition of modern art, in part by soliciting gifts of European films. Soon donations of films, primarily U.S. productions, began to flood the archive in a stream that continued for decades, much of it nitrate footage, the old and combustible film stock used before 1952. For years, MoMA has devoted large resources to preservation, transferring millions of feet of nitrate to more stable triacetate stock. Now, however, the museum is also acting to balance the Americanization of its collection by seeking out donations of foreign work. With these and other activities—such as its vast exhibition schedule and its circulating film library which rents some 4,000 films each year—MoMA has built a reputation as possibly the most ecumenical defender of cinema history.

The Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley, California, is less interested in acquiring more movies than it is in showing off what it already has on file. From its beginning in 1971, PFA was envisioned as a West Coast version of the Cinémathèque Francais in Paris, and toward that end it now screens about 800 films a year at its University Art Museum Theater. The PFA collection is skewed in unusual directions and includes, among other things, the largest single group of Japanese films outside of Japan, a selection of films from the Soviet Republic of Georgia, and a strong representation of West Coast avant-garde films from the 1960s and '70s. As for new acquisitions, "We are running out of room," according to spokesperson Shelly Diekman. "We welcome films from independents, but within the constraints of our storage space."



***Let My People Live*, director Edgar Ulmer's 1938 film starring Rex Ingram.**

Courtesy IMP/GEH Stills Collection

Film archives are not accustomed to donations of prints from individual filmmakers. They typically grow in bulges on donations from distributors who have gone out of business or from private collectors who want to hand over their collections to obtain a tax write-off. Amid this free and thus far continuous flow of prints, institutional collections throughout the country have little incentive to approach small-scale producers for gifts of particular films. As a result, archives perhaps unwittingly reinforce the hegemony of Hollywood and its overseas conterparts (commercial studios abroad give freely of their films) and otherwise lend credibility to filmmaking in established genres.

As one might expect, the archive of the University of California in Los Angeles is the general depository for Hollywood product. In less than 20 years the overall collection there has swollen to more than 36,000 films, in part from the generosity of the major studios which, it must be said, prefer to make new films and let someone else worry about taking care of the old. ULCA's collection has also benefited from the friendly consort of the National Center for Film and Video Preservation at the American Film Institute in Los Angeles, whose own substantial holdings (21,000 films) are permanently loaned in parcels to film archives around the country. The center, which was formerly run by UCLA archive director Rosen, has been especially generous in its donations to the neighboring archive. As a result of this and its industry connections, UCLA has compiled the best record anywhere of the U.S. film industry. Yet the archive also holds an unusual group of films from the People's Republic of China, and, thanks to its fairly tolerant acquisition



***Citizen Kane*, Orson Welles' film classic.**

Courtesy the Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive



***The Big Trail*, the 1930 western directed by Raoul Walsh and starring the young John Wayne (left).**

Courtesy the Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive

***For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Sam Wood, 1943.**

Courtesy the UCLA Film and Television Archive

policy, UCLA is in a good position to assemble in the coming years the most desirable collection of films in the country.

The National Center for Film and Video Preservation in Los Angeles, apart from its role as a generous film donor, is in the business of cataloguing and rehabilitating the huge stock of aging films and television programs now languishing on shelves around the country. Funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the American Film Institute, the center seeks to restore old prints and safeguard the perishable products of the film and television industries from deterioration. Recently, the National Center began compiling what it calls the National Moving Image Database, a computer file that will eventually gather together information on all of the film and television holdings of archives and producers in the United States, including credits, exhibition histories, and the whereabouts of negatives and copyright holders. This massive file could well become the authoritative source on film production and distribution history in the U.S., eclipsing the otherwise partial records of even the largest libraries of moving image material. Whether this database may also strengthen the authority of exisiting archives is a matter for debate, yet here is evidence of the rationalization of film archives, which began 50 years ago as haphazard assortments of private collections.

It should be apparent, however, that whether a film is archived is entirely dependent on factors external to filmmaking *per se*, such as its economic success, its favor among critics, its ideological pointedness, or, just as often, merely whether a producer chooses to take care of the negative. Film archives in the United States would like to have a public profile as much as they would like to acquire more films, therefore, they tend to follow marketplace trends in their collection habits. Ideological and economic forces reign over archives as much as they do over filmmaking and distribution.

The national stockpile of the major film collections has largely been built according to standards laid down by successful private enterprise and less often by those that refuse commercial values. Until this state of affairs is altered, which is unlikely, film archives will grow as they have—at the grace of well-financed benefactors, and not as an effort to recognize the whole range of cinema, its conformism and its deviance, its successes and its commercial failures, its pleasures and its powers of criticism.



Edward Ball is a critic living in New York City.

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CAN THIS PRODUCTION BE SAVED

Debra Goldman

A foundation has promised to fund my film—a drama about the relationship between a young girl and her grandmother who is confined to a nursing home. But the foundation tells me it cannot give me a grant directly; I must find a nonprofit, tax-exempt film organization to act as my "fiscal umbrella." Unfortunately, there are no such organizations around my area. What should I do?

Your problem is common to independent producers. Most funding agencies cannot give grants directly to individuals, but are required by the Internal Revenue Service to channel the funds through an organization registered as nonprofit, and, in most cases, tax-exempt, which will take fiscal responsibility for the grant. You have several options to consider in finding a fiscal sponsor (also called "umbrella," "conduit," "agent").

The most impractical solution would be to incorporate yourself as a nonprofit organization—a time-consuming and potentially costly process that is probably only worthwhile if you have a large project or plan to produce charitably-funded films on a consistent basis in the future. The better alternative is to find a fiscal sponsor. This organization does not have to be local or a media organization. Any nonprofit in good standing that is willing and able to take on your project can serve as an umbrella. But there are a number of factors for you to consider in your search for the right organization. Earlier this year the Center for Arts Information published *Sponsorships: A Guide for Video and Filmmakers*, written by Laura Green and myself. It is the only comprehensive guide to the complicated, nonstandardized process of sponsorships. Here are a few of the booklet's tips for producers on finding the right sponsor:

At minimum, your sponsor should agree to submit your grant application(s) in its name to funding agencies. (You will probably do the actual physical preparation and mailing of the application, but the sponsor will lend its name, legal status, and any other necessary documentation the funder requires, such as an audited financial statement.) If you receive the grant, the funder will write the check to your sponsor. Your sponsor will, in turn, dispense the money to you, taking a small percentage of the grant as an administrative fee. A sponsor may elect to do more: help with fundraising, provide in-kind administrative support, allow you to use their bulk mail rates and the like. These services should be outlined in your letter of agreement with the sponsor.

Any type of nonprofit could provide the basics of sponsorship. But consider several factors in deciding which is the best for you.

Media or nonmedia organizations? Media organizations may be more familiar with the erratic cash needs and vagaries of film and video production, and be able to provide you with specialized media resources and information. However, an organization whose purpose is close to your project—such as a group that deals with the aged or women's issues—may take a special interest in the project and offer access to resources and information particular to your subject matter.

Geography: Nonprofits are registered by the IRS, so they can funnel funds from anywhere in the U.S. Some funders, though, will only give grants to recipients in certain cities or states. A local funder may be more convenient, especially if emergency checks are needed, and you will be more likely to develop a close working relationship with a sponsor in your area than a sponsor-by-phone.

Organization and working style: Make sure the sponsoring organization is professionally and efficiently run, and the staff is reasonably accessible to you. Good bookkeeping methods and respect for the details of funding (filing reports, timeliness, etc.) are important to insure that your project is not jeopardized by administrative sloppiness. The sponsor should also be willing to remind you to write acknowledgements to funders, show you how to keep clean books, and provide other tips so you can keep up good funder relations.

Experience: There is usually an inverse relationship between your sponsor's familiarity with media production and the work you have to do. The less your sponsor understands about budgets and production finances, the more effort you'll have to devote to acquainting them with the process.

Finance: Financial stability and healthy cash flow are a must. You should receive your requested checks in a timely fashion, with only the reasonable amount of bureaucractic delay. You should feel confident that the sponsor—and your money—will be around years later when your project is finally completed. Some sponsors may also be willing to give advances prior to the receipt of the grant or pay vendors directly rather than funnel the money through you.

Ownership: You, the artist, should retain ownership of any noncommissioned sponsored project. The sponsor should receive screen acknowledgement on the completed film or tape, but it has no ownership or distribution rights over your project.

For more information, consult CAI's booklet. There you'll find tips on finding potential sponsors, a list of research resources, suggestions on how to maintain a good working relationship, a review of the tax implications of a sponsored grant, and sample letters of agreement. It costs $6, and is available from the Center for Arts Information, 1285 Avenue of the Americas, 3rd fl., New York, NY 10019; and at AIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

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WORLD WITHOUT END: THE MARGARET MEAD FILM FESTIVAL



Indian customs of death and cremation are documented in Robert Gardner's *Forest of Bliss*, which screened at the Margaret Mead Film Festival.

Photo: Jane Tuckerman

Gordon Hitchens

The tenth annual Margaret Mead Film Festival at the American Museum of Natural History, New York, screened 63 documentaries depicting 40 cultures worldwide during its event of September 14-18. Of these, 35 films had New York premieres. Films offered to the festival numbered 460.

The festival, founded in 1977 by the world-famous anthropologist Margaret Mead and her colleagues, "is very much in the spirit of Mead's approach to anthropology," said Malcolm Arth, festival programmer and chair of the museum's Department of Education, which oversees the event. "She worked to bring anthropology to large audience, to expose them to cross-cultural differences. She wanted people to become sensitized, to look at their own behavior and attitudes with a more sophisticated eye." Since her death the festival has become an annual tribute to her pioneering work in pictorial documentation of world culture. Mead had encouraged anthropologists to use filmmaking to produce visual records, supplementing their scholarly research. Due in substantial part to Mead's efforts, cinema and video are routinely used today in ethnographic studies.

To celebrate the tenth anniversary, 16 older works from earlier Mead festivals were shown in a special retrospective. These included films by ethnographer-producers Jean Rouch, Robert Gardner, John Marshall, and David and Judith MacDougall. Films by wife-husband team Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson were also seen, including their *Trance And Dance in Bali*, (1938) and *Childhood Rivalry in Bali and New Guinea* (1952). In addition, the festival made its first-time appearance on television whenWNET-New York programmed a retrospective of 10 titles in eight weekly programs.

Anthropological film has changed drastically since the days of James A. Fitzpatrick's *Traveltalks*, the adventure pseudo-documentaries of Martin and Osa Johnson, and the Frank Buck *Bring 'Em Back Alive* series, which for decades were Americans' only exposure to foreign peoples. These films emphasized so-called primitives, with images of savages with bones through their noses and strange scarification of face and body, either naked or wearing unusual costumes, feathered headdress, and adornments. One sensed the filmmaker as a distant outsider, who regarded tribal peoples as specimens, exotic curiosities.

The 1986 program reflected the developments in the field. "The Margaret Mead Festival considers high quality documentaries of any length dealing with people in real situations in any part of the world," explains Arth. "We seek films which reveal human behavior in any cultural setting. People sometimes forget that anthropologists can be as interested in life in Kansas as in Katmandu. As many as a third of the selected films focus on western cultures, including the United States." Last year such films included Kirby Dick's *Privates Practices: The Story of a Sexual Surrogate*; Stephen Okazaki's *Unfinished Business*; and *A Dollar A Day, Ten Cents A Dance*, by Mark Schwartz and Geoffrey Dunn. In all, 17 of the new films offered, or 40 percent of the total, were made by U.S. independents. Other nations represented included the U.S.S.R., Argentina, Australia, Great Britain, Italy, Hungary, Papua New Guinea, Japan, Poland, and Indonesia.

Like ethnographic film, the festival, too, has come a long way. For its first several years, its future was uncertain, "a year-to-year operation," stated Arth. "As Margaret Mead and I stood on that stage, we couldn't be sure the festival's budget would be renewed. We had not yet become institutionalized. But now we have a solid commitment from the museum, the festival is truly a part of the New York cultural scene, serving a national, even an international purpose. Whatever it takes to make it continue will be done, and our longevity is assured. We're optimistic."

The event is financed solely by the museum except for an annual grant of $8,000 from the New York State Council on the Arts, pledged through 1987. Once free to museum members and to the general public entering the museum on its "pay what you wish" policy, in 1987 admission will cost $5. Limited funding, however, continues to keep video out of the festival. The technology, which is "cheaper than film and uses less elaborate gear, has democratized the process of filmmaking," Arth acknowledges. But as the small staff is already swamped by over 500 hours of prescreening, the festival is forced to limit the event to film.

Films screened in the museum's 1000- and 3000-seat theaters are shown once during the five-day event, while those in the smaller 90- and 115-seat auditoriums receive encores. "Ideally we'd like the filmmaker present for every screening," said Jonathan Stack, who, with Arth and Nathaniel Johnson, has served as

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coprogrammer of the event for the last few years. In 1986, he estimated 85 percent of the films were accompanied by their makers, who appeared in question-and-answer sessions following the screenings. "The atmosphere lends itself to discussion. We've moved the festival headquarters nearer the screening rooms to make for better interaction." The festival provides small travel stipends to filmmakers to defray costs, as well as unofficial assistance that makes it possible for many to attend. "Last year I had a lot of people sleeping on my living room floor," Stack admitted.

He estimated the event attracted between 8,000 to 10,000 in 1986, including "people from the film community, the anthropology community, special interest groups, like those, say, interested in Native Americans, and those who are just curious. More than half these films don't get other showings in New York, so it's the only chance to see a broad range of ethnographic films."

Perhaps because the festival celebrated its tenth anniversary last year, "We had the best press coverage ever, with articles in the *Village Voice* and the *New York Times*," Stack reports. Thanks to the festival's connection to the museum, the event also has formidable publicity resources of its own, such as advance coverage in the magazine *Natural History*, which reaches hundreds of thousands, and the museum's own periodical *Rotunda*, read by 40,000 New Yorkers. However, he adds, films rarely get reviewed *per se*, noting, "This is an educational event, not a film festival in the strictest sense." Nevertheless, for filmmakers willing to make the effort, a New York appearance in the festival can lead to other opportunities. Following the festival *Private Practices* moved to the Bleeker Street Cinema. Susan Fanshell, maker of *A Weave of Time*, "really used the festival to push her film," Stack recalls. "It gave her a film a send-off. Although we're not in a position to promote films ourselves, we encourage producers to use the festival as a context for promotion."

Arth maintains international contacts for the Mead Festival, exchanging ideas and titles with producers, anthropologists, institutions and festivals, including the Festival Dei Popoli, Florence; Cinema de Reel, Paris; and the Nyon Festival, Switzerland. You'll usually find representatives from these festivals present at the New York event as well. Says Arth, "Anthropology is interested in our differences, but also in our sameness, behavior that unites us as a common bond. Sometimes in these foreign peoples, who are not alien to us, we recognize ourselves and say, 'Oh yes, that's what we do, too.'"

Gordon Hitchens is a journalist and a professor of film at C. W. Post/Long Island University.

The 1987 Margaret Mead Film Festival will be held September 14-17. Formats: 35mm and 16mm. 3/4" and 1/2" video OK for preview. No fee. Submission deadline: now through April

30. Filmmakers will be notified about selection in May. Contact Malcolm Arth or Jonathan Stack, Margaret Mead Film Festival, American Museum of Natural History, Department of Education, Central Park W. at 79th St., New York, NY 10024; (212) 873-1070.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Coco Fusco. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement**, and since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

FOCUS AWARDS, August 26, LA. $60,000 in cash & cars awarded to student films under 30 min. Japanese auto manufacturer Nissan is the major sponsor of the more than 20 awards, which incl. prizes for editing, cinematography & feature-length screenplay. A favorite launching pad for Columbia & NYU film students. Deadline: May 1. Format: 16mm only. Contact Sam Katz, Focus, 1140 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10036; (212) 575-0270.

HOMETOWN USA VIDEO FESTIVAL, July 16, regional. Sponsored by National Federation of Local Cable Programmers. Dual award certificates in 31 cats. (now incl. senior citizen, documentary public awareness & music video) for volunteer- & professionally-produced programs. Entries must have premiered on community access TV & have appeared on local cable channels in the last yr. 1200 entries submitted in 1986 from 302 cities in 36 states. Videos are screened at 9 NFLCP regional sites & the final judging takes place in Decatur, GA, from May 11-24. The 3-hr Hometown USA Bicycle Tour package—a compilation tape of selected winners—rents to access centers nationwide. Deadline: March 15. Formats: 3/4", VHS, Betamax 1 & II. Fees: $20 for volunteer productions, $30 for professional. For fest sites & further info, contact Julie Omelchuck, NFLCP, 906 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20003; (202) 544-7272.

HOUSTON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, April 17-26, TX. After several yrs of persistent criticism of inflated fees, unpaid prize money & excessive PR hype, festival director J. Hunter Todd is now making a new pitch to filmmakers outside Hollywood. Todd says he's lowered fees for fledging indies, added 2 new $1000 student awards & created several new subcategories, like shorts, documentary & experimental. One problem yet to be overcome: chronic underattendance. In 1986 300 films were selected from 2114 entries by a selection committee dominated by local TV people. Seminars held on financing, screenplays, distribution & directing. A Gregory Peck retrospective promised for 1987. Deadline: March 15. Fees: $25 for students & independents; $35-50 for production companies. Formats: 3/4", VHS, 16mm, 35mm. Contact HIFF Entry Director, Box 56566, Houston, TX 77256; (213) 965-9955.

HUMBOLDT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 6-11, Arcata, CA. The oldest student-run int'l festival in the country will have Peter Rose, Pat Oleszko & Charles Lyman on hand this year to judge its 20th annual competition. $1800 in awards given to films in all genres, incl. a top prize for best surrealist film. Judges see all entries & critiques are sent to filmmakers. Max. running time: 60 min. Entry fees: $15 per film. Formats: 16mm silent or optical sound, 3/4" & VHS. Contact Bonnie Barnes, Miriam Labes & Michael Fox, Coordinators, Humboldt Film Festival, Humboldt State Univer., Theatre Arts Dept., Arcata, CA 95521; (707) 826-3566.

NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN MEDIA, August 27, NYC. Two $1000 prizes awarded to films on subjects relating to psych. Cats.: news/documentary & entertainment. Material must have been produced for the general public within the last yr. No self-help or instructional films. Emphasis is on network & public TV programming, but indies have been represented in the past. Producers of series can submit video of 1 complete program w/ representative clips of the rest. Judging panel composed of 3 psychologists & 3 TV journalist/producers.Winners flown to American Psychological Association convention for awards reception. Deadline: April 15. Formats: 1/2", 3/4", 16mm. Contact Carolyn Gammon, APA, 1200 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 955-7710.

NEWARK BLACK FILM FESTIVAL, June 24- July 29, NJ. Though the emphasis is on commercial cinema, the festival incl. a competition & accepts entries by independents. $500 awarded to top films in each of the following cats.: experimental, animation, narrative & documentary. Steven Spielberg's *The Color Purple*, John Sayles' *The Brother from Another Planet*, & Peter Davis' *Winnie & Nelson Mandela* were among the 11 films screened for free at the Newark Museum in '86. No fees. Deadline: April. Formats: 16mm only. Contact Celeste Bateman, the Newark Museum, Box 540, Newark, NJ 07110; (201) 596-6550.

NEW YORK CITY EXPERIMENTAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, late May-early June. Hunter Yoder's showcase for experimental video & hybrid film & video production is now in its 6th year. 1986 judges Robert Haller, Bob Harris & Jeanette Vulcolo awarded $200 prizes to 10 films & videos chosen from 230 entries. Winners shown at Global Village, the Donnell Library & the Staten Island Institute of Arts & Sciences. Yoder also offers rental packages after festival. '86 winners incl. Deborah Wanner's *She Stories*, Laurie McDonald's *Three Worlds Apart* & Barbara Hammer's *Optic Nerve*. Fee: $20. Formats: 3/4" (VHS & Beta OK for preselection). Deadline: April 15. Contact Hunter Yoder, NYC Experimental Video & Film Festival, 178 Union St., Brooklyn, NY 11231; (718) 858-3140.

SINKING CREEK FILM & VIDEO CELEBRATION, June 9-13, Nashville, TN. Now in its 18th year, this event held at Vanderbilt University brings students & working producers together for an intensive cine-

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matic celebration. Participants ranging from high school students to professionals meet for technical workshops & a special program dedicated to the work of 1 filmmaker who is always on hand for discussions. For competition, films are grouped according to age of producers, not genres; $6,000 in prize money given. All the films selected are rented by the festival at $1 per minute. Last year 50 were chosen from 250 films submitted. Formats: 16mm (1/2" video OK for preselection of longer films). Deadlines: films over 60 min., April 15; under 60 min., April 23. Fees: $19-30. Contact Mary Jane Coleman, Sinking Creek Film Celebration, 1250 Shiloh Rd., Greenville, TN 37743; (615) 638-6524. Housing inquiries should be directed to Dean James Sandlin, Sarratt Student Center, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37240; (615) 322-2471.

STUDENT ACADEMY AWARDS, early June, LA. Sponsored by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, this competition offers 4 $1000 prizes to student films in animation, documentary, dramatic, experimental cats. Academy members serve as judges. Compilation reel of winning films is sent on university tour after the festival. School projects only. Max. running time: 60 min. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 70mm. Deadline: April 1. Contact Richard Miller, Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, 89 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211; (213) 278-8990.

SUFFOLK & NASSAU COUNTY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, June 1-28, Huntington, NY. The 4th annual event, sponsored by the Motion Picture /TV Bureau of the Suffolk Co. Office of Economic Development, was once limited to Long Island themes & residents. Now it is open to filmmakers nationwide on any subject, but promotional & historical material on LI's Nassau & Suffolk Counties still welcome. Cats. incl. arts & entertainment, sales & marketing, doc./information & student. Films are judged by members of the Suffolk County Film Commission. $2500 in cash awards is divided 8 ways, plus additional prizes of equipment & services. After screenings at 3 theaters in Huntington, top films are shown in Port Jefferson, East Hampton & broadcast on Long Island cable television. Deadline: Apr. 30. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4" & VHS. Entry fees: $50 for professionals, $25 for students. Contact Christopher Cooke, Dennison Bldg., 11th fl., Veterans Memorial Hwy., Happauge, NY 11788; (516) 360-4800.

FOREIGN

CAMBRIDGE FILM FESTIVAL, late July, England. The 11th annual film section of the Cambridge Arts Festival showcases int'l art cinema & features a retrospective of 1 auteur each yr. Deadline: April 15. Formats: 16mm, 35mm. Contact David Jakes, Cambridge Film Festival, Arts Cinema, 8 Market Passage, Cambridge, England; tel. (0223) 31694; telex 81574 CAMARTS.

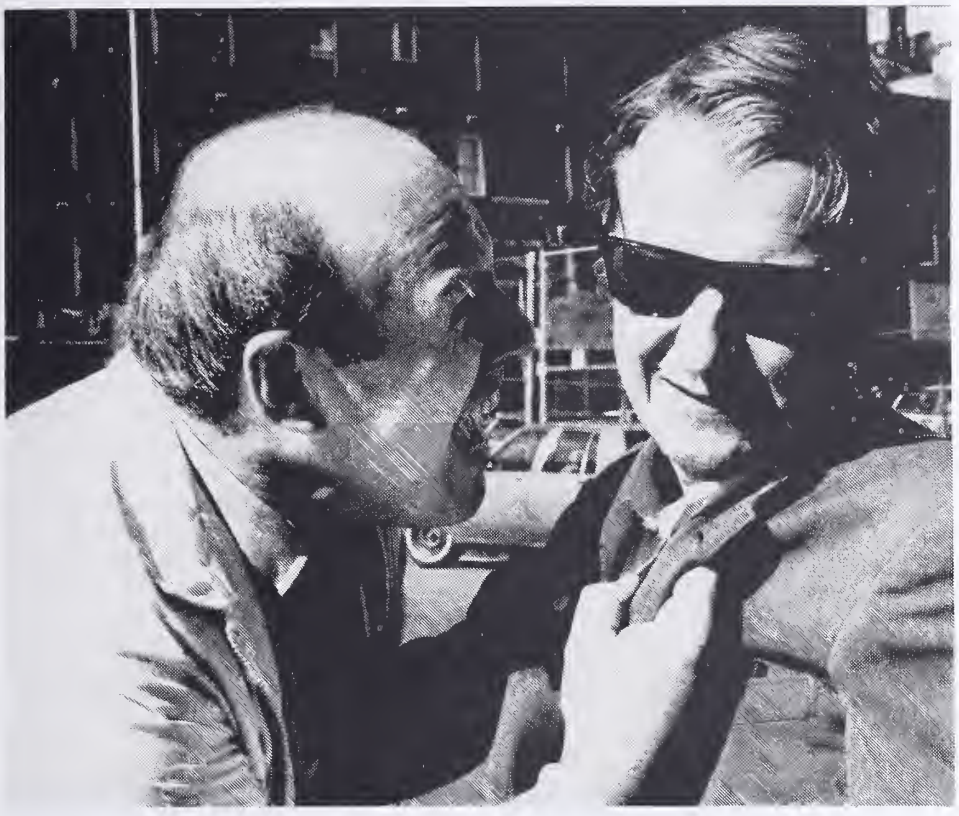
MOSCOW INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, June-July, USSR. This biennial ranks w/ Cannes, Berlin & Venice for prestige & commercial value on the festival circuit. U.S. independent docs are often shown, but feature selection is slanted toward Hollywood. Three competitive cats.: 35mm features, shorts & docs & childrens' films—plus several non-competitive sections. We hope you have better luck getting information about fest deadlines from the Soviet Embassy than we did. In USSR contact Y. Khodjaev, Director, Directorate of International Film Festivals, Sovinterfest, Sosinko of the USSR, 10 Khohklovsky Per., Moscow 109028, USSR; tel. 297 76 45; telex 411263 fest SU.

MUNICH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, June 20-28, W. Germany. This ever-growing venue for int'l cinema consistently showcases U.S. indies. 1986 feature selections incl. Donna Deitch's *Desert Hearts* , Bill Sherwood's *Parting Glances*, Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March* & Lizzie Borden's *Working Girls*. Susana Munoz & Lourdes Portillo's *Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo* & Carlos Ortiz's *Machito: A Latin Legacy* were among the documentary selections. Recently added Film Festival Exchange matches producers with distributors, TV buyers, etc. who want to do business. One important caveat for this non-competitive event: If you enter your film in Munich in the summer, you can't show it at Berlin the following winter, where all screenings must be W. German premieres. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, 3/4" & VHS NTSC. Contact Ulla Rapp for information about deadlines ASAP at Turkenstrasse 93, D-8000 Munich 40, W. Germany; tel. 089 39-3011/12; telex 521 4674 im f d.

SETMANA INTERNACIONAL DE CINEMA DE BARCELONA, June, Spain. Whereas this event was once intended to "promote cooperation between film & television," the more recent emphasis is on commercially viable art cinema, primarily European. Cats.: doc, fiction/drama, series, experimental, plus TV movies & shorts. 4 "Lady w/ the Umbrella" prizes awarded, plus1 audience-choice prize; 3 medals given to shorts. Films in English must have Spanish, Catalan or French subtitles. No entry fee. Deadline: April 30. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, U-matic, PAL, Secam or NTSC. Contact Jose Luis Guarner, 29 Setmana Internacional de Cinema de Barcelona, Avenida Maria Christina S/N, Palacio No. 1, Barcelona 4, Spain; tel. 2233101.

TAORMINA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Italy, June. Set in a resort town in Sicily, this festival emphasizes Hollywood fare more than independents, though a few have made it into competition. Primarily for films slated for Italian release. Contact Festival delle Nazione Taormina, Via Calabria 1SOL 301-bis, Ente Provinciale del Turismo, Messina, Italy, or Dir. Gugliemo Biraghi, Vis P.S. Mancini 12 Roma, Italy.

VELDEN AMATEUR FILM FESTIVAL OF NATIONS, late May, Austria. Well-established gov't-supported event for amateur shorts under 30 min. Prizes given in documentary, travel, games, & fantasy/ experimental cats for films in 16mm & super 8. Participants must agree to allow their films to be aired on Austrian TV. Tourist packages offered to attendants, incl. "free admission to the gambling casino at Velden." Deadline: April 30. Contact W. Elsner or Hans Falle, Organisationskitec Kurdirektion A=9220 Velden a. W.S., Kartner Kustura; tel. 04274/2105; telex 42-2604.



Richard Litt (right) plays Streck, the evil tenant-basher of Jacob Burkhardt's new feature *Landlord Blues*.
Courtesy filmmaker

Renee Tajima

Studios are not the only ones looking to home video to give their products a second life. Sheldon Rochlin's 1965 documentary **Vali: The Witch of Positano** has been rereleased by Mystic Fire Video, Rochlin's New York-based independent label. The project began some 30 years ago, when coproducer George Plimpton discovered the seductive Australian artist Vali Myers in Paris, dancing to the rhythms of African bush songs. When Plimpton met Rochlin, then a young filmmaker, at the 1963 Venice Film Festival, the two determined to make a film about Vali, following her to the mountains along the Amalfi coast of Italy. There, in a tiny hermit's house with a domed roof, Vali lived as a child of nature: painted like a Paupan, dressed like a gypsy, "weaving dreams, casting spells, howling at the full moon with her white rabbit." The cassette is available by mail order. *Vali: The Witch of Positano*: Mystic Fire Video, 24 Horatio St., New York, NY 10014; (212) 645-2733.

After giving concessions to the George A. Hormel Company 16 times in the past 23 years, the members of the United Food and Commercial Workers' Local P-9 in Austin, Minnesota, decided they'd had enough. In August of 1985, they began a protracted strike that electrified the U.S. labor movement. How were the P-9 strkers able to shut down production at Hormel plants from Seattle to Dallas to Atlanta? Why were they able to hold out for seven months in the face of the National Guard and a powerful corporation? **We're Not Gonna Take It**, a 15-minute home video by Pamela Yates, tells the inside story of P-9's fight against concessions. The tape is the third in a series of low-cost, high-quality videos distributed by Skylight Pictures to bring political struggles into people's homes. The first two were *I'll Vote On*, about the Federal government's efforts to thwart black voting rights in Alabama, and *Who Are the Contras?*, an introduction and behind-the-scenes look at the U.S.-backed anti-Sandinista rebels. *We're Not Gonna Take It*: Skylight Pictures, 330 W. 42nd St., 24th fl., New York, NY 10036; (212) 947-5333.

Realizations Productions has completed shooting on **A Mistaken Charity**, directed by C.R. Porty and produced by Bette Craig. The one-hour drama, based on a short story by New England writer Mary Wilkins Freeman, was shot on location in the Massachusetts towns of North Adams and Williamstown. Set at the turn-of-the-century, the film stars Anne Pitoniak and Kate Wilkinson as two elderly sisters whose neighbors arrange for their care in a home for retired ladies. The Shattuck sisters, however, don't appreciate the gesture and run away to return to their own home. *A Mistaken Charity* is slated for *American Playhouse*'s spring season. *A Mistaken Charity*: Realizations, 100 E. 17th St., New York, NY 10003; (212) 505-5025, 505-5026.

The May 1 march of 80,000 through the streets of El Salvador is the departure point for **Dateline: San Salvador**, a look at the broadening public dissent in the war-torn Central American country. Pamela Cohen produced and directed this 30-minute videotape under the auspices of Camino Film Projects, the social change media organization formerly known as Communications: El Salvador. *Dateline* incorporates archival footage to bring El Salvador's current crisis into focus, including the shocking on-camera assassination of a student during the 1980 government attack on the National University. Interviews with Salvadorans from all walks of life—members of the Mothers and Families of the Disappeared, refugees on the outskirts of the capital, and the leadership of the National Unity of Salvadorean Workers, the new labor coalition—tell of continued government repression. *Dateline: San Salvador*: Camino Film Projects, Box 291575, Los Angeles, CA 90029; (213) 461-7305.

In 1980 Peggy Stern directed a short black-and-white film about Stephanie, a lively and unusually candid 13-year-old living in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Five years later, Stern returned to find Stephanie as she began her senior year in high school, facing an uncertain future. The result is a one-hour documentary film of a U.S. teenager's dreams and disappointments as she journeys through adolescence. The cameras follow Stephanie attending—and cutting—classes, capturing her visits with the school disciplinary officer and her date to the senior prom. By depicting the world into which Stephanie and those like her withdraw, the film provides insight into the lives of those who become lost within the system. **Stephanie** premiered at the 1986 London International Film Festival. *Stephanie*: Peggy Stern, 205 Mulberry St., New York, NY 10012; (212) 226-5725.

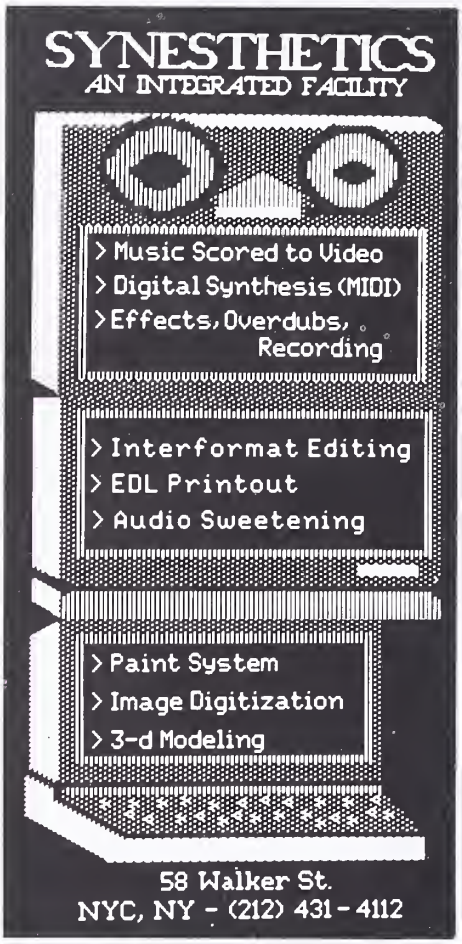
Doris Chase has completed **Dear Papa**, the second in a six-part series of video dramas entitled *By Herself*. The 30-minute tape features the mother-daughter relationship of Ann Jackson and Roberta Wallach, as it tells of their differing views of the man who is "papa" to one and "gramps" to the other. *Dear Papa*, produced with assistance from the

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Media Alliance and New York Foundation for the Arts, has been invited to screen at the 1987 Berlin Film Festival and Filmex, and has already been shown at the London Film Festival. *Dear Papa*: Doris Chase Productions, 222 W. 23rd St., Ste. 722, New York, NY 10011; (212) 243-3700.

While southern Californians prepared to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday last year, 5,000 homeless people wandered the streets of Los Angeles' westside. During that week, South Bay Newsreel brought their plight to local cable systems throughout the area in the 30-minute tape **Homeless on the Westside.** Produced by David Hunt and Toni Flynn, the documentary lets the homeless speak for themselves. South Bay Newsreel brings grassroots television to southern California, addressing issues that are of local focus but national concern. Two other recent programs looked at the development of railroad land in Hermosa Beach and a proposed plan to drop billions of gallons of wastewater sludge off the coast of Orange County. *Homeless on the Westside*: South Bay Newsreel, 206 So. Fuller, #104, Los Angeles, CA 90036; (213) 931-2903.

Principal photography has been completed on **Landlord Blues**, a new independent feature about regular folks fighting for a fair shake in the big city. Filmmaker Jacob Burkhardt, who wrote and directed this funny, realistic tale of tyranny and tenacity, adds a modern twist to the age-old story of beleaguered tenants versus the unscrupulous landlord. George (played by Mark Boone, Jr.,), the easy-going and impetuous owner of a local bike shop, and his girlfriend Viv (Raye Donnell of *She's Gotta Have It*), struggle with the money-grubbing Streck (Richard Litt), an unethical villain of a landlord who will stop at nothing to rid the neighborhood of little guys like George. Finally he and his friends hatch a harebrained scheme to undermine the shifty Streck, ultimately getting what they want, but not the way they want it. Set in the gritty milieu of New York's Lower Eastside, *Landlord Blues* also features singer Nona Hendryx in a supporting role as George's hip, street-smart lawyer Sal Viscuzzo. Burkhardt, who is shooting for a spring release date, is seeking additional financing to complete the 95-minute feature. *Landlord Blues*: Jacob Burkhardt, Landlord Pictures, Inc., 201 E. 4th St., New York, NY 10009; (212) 533-9473.

MOVING?
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SUMMARY OF THE AIVF/FIVF BOARD MINUTES

The board of directors of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers met at the New World Foundation on December 19, 1986.

Executive director Sapadin opened the meeting with the announcement that the four candidates the board had invited to come on the Foundation for Independent Video and Film board—Adrianne Benton, Lisa Frigand, Steve Savage, and Richard Lorber—had accepted [see FIVF board minutes below]. The staff then reported on their recent activities, followed by membership and advocacy committee reports. Regarding membership, Robin Reidy reported that chairperson Joyce Bolinger is planning an April seminar in Chicago, sponsored by the Center for New Television and the Chicago Area Film/Video Network, at which Lillian Jimenez and Sapadin will be featured speakers.

Loni Ding reported that the advocacy committee meeting was attended by five board members and four general members. In its consideration of the Corproation for Public Broadcasting's upcoming content review of Public Broadcasting Service public affairs programming, the committee concluded a study administered by the presidentially-appointed CPB board is inherently wrong and will have a chilling effect on programming. Therefore they recommended Sapadin write letters to the House and Senate communications committees and discuss the issue with other industry leaders. The committee then considered the request of Marc Weiss, executive producer of the proposed PBS series *The American Documentary*, that the AIVF board write a letter to CPB urging it to fund the full $260,000 requested for the series; $150,000 was granted [see "Sequels" in this issue]. After heated debate, the committee recommended by a vote of five to two that two letters be sent: one to CPB urging full funding, with qualification that the board does not view the series as an ideal model for funding independents within public television, and another to executive director Dave Davis requesting that independent producer representatives be added to the station representatives on the series' board.

The issue of supporting letters for the series was then taken up by the full board under the new business agenda with Marc Weiss present. Another heated discussion followed, in which those in favor argued that the series will help remedy the longstanding problems of minimal carriage and payment for independent work acquired by PBS; those opposed objected to more Program Fund money going to a station consortium and the lack of independent control over the series. After going into executive session, the board accepted the committee's recommendation to send a letter to CPB (four in favor, two opposed, one abstention) and to Dave Davis (five in favor, two opposed).

In other new business:

1. The board certified Deanne Morse to take the board position of the late Leo Dratfield.

2. Unanimous approval of the motion that the board present an amendment of bylaws to permit chapter formation to AIVF members at the annual membership meeting this spring.

3. Unanimous approval of moving the Indie Awards from the spring to the fall, as AIVF's fiscal year ends in the spring. A task force was formed to investigate the possibility of another kind of social event for the spring to coincide with the conference of the National Association of Media Art Centers and the American Film/Video Festival.

4. As nine of the board's 11 members now live outside New York, it was resolved that Bart Weiss look into the possibility of the board occasionally meeting by conference call.

5. Sapadin suggested, in light of AIVF's national growth and visibility, the organization change its name to the *National* Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers. The board's consensus was that the matter was worth exploring.

The next AIVF board meeting is scheduled for March 12 and 13 at the AIVF offices. These are public meetings and members are encouraged to attend.

Following adjournment of the morning meeting of the AIVF board, the FIVF board convened in the afternoon. Under old business, the board unanimously approved one-year terms for non-elected board members Lisa Frigand, who expressed her desire to help FIVF's corporate fundraising effort; Steve Savage, who is interested in membership strategies and *The Independent;* Adrianne Benton, who offered to lend assistance to FIVF's foundation development; and Richard Lorber, who has previously expressed interest in helping with marketing, membership development, and in contributing his expertise in syndication and distribution to FIVF's seminar program.

On the new business agenda, Sapadin reported that he has been discussing with the Benton Foundation the possibility of FIVF administering the Donor Advised Grant program previously administered by the the Film Fund. Although there was some concern about the appropriateness of the FIVF's board involvement in funding decisions, the board unanimously approved continued discussions between Sapadin and the Benton Foundation to explore the possibilities.

The next FIVF board meeting will be held on March 13.

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The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for the "Buy • Rent • Sell," "Freelancers" & "Postproduction" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$15 per issue.** Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced, & worded exactly as it should appear.

Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g, March 8 for the May issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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FOR SALE: French Eclair ACL with 1-400' mag and 3-200' mags; Cinema Products crystal/variable speed motor; Angenieux 12.5-75 zoom; new G&M battery belt. Recently overhauled, excellent condition. $5,000 or best offer. Call Peter at (301) 276-6134.

OFFICE SPACE/DESK SPACE available for sublet in midtown location. 24 hr access/video editing. Short term or longer, price negotiable. Call Howard or Josh (212) 245-5885.

FOR SALE: 16mm 6-plate Showcron flatbed editor. Great shape! Call (214) 238-3380 and leave message.

FOR SALE: 6-plate Moviola editing machine. Comes with assorted editing room equipment. Privately owned. Price negotiable. (718) 622-0938.

FOR SALE: Sony DXC 1610 color video camera. One private owner, low usage. Includes new battery, lens and carrying case. CMA5 available. $700. (201) 944-8422 evenings.

FOR SALE: Moviola M77. 16mm 6-plate flatbed editor in great condition. $5,000 includes splicer, rewinds. Terrific deal. 212-966-4528.

FOR SALE: 16mm 6-plate CINEMONTA Editor, mint condition, $8,500 or trade for vehicle. Meanwhile, you can rent this beauty (it's only got 1 and 1/2 films on it, honest!) in a clean, fully-equipped room overlooking San Francisco Bay. A1VF/BAVC/FAF discount. Also selling synchronizers, splicers, viewers, 1/4" decks, Magnasync dubber—all cheap. (415) 444-3074.

FOR SALE: Eclair NPR 16mm camera, 24/30fps crystal motor, 12-120 Ang. lens, 2-400' mags, block battery, lens shade, custom case, accessories. All excellent condition. $2,500. 35mm Devry XD projector. Good condition. $350 plus ship. Split reels, new. 16mm, 1200' @ $10; 35mm, 1000' @ $20; 35mm, 2000' @ $25. One pair Hollywood Film Company 35mm rewinds, single shafts, $40. Call (303) 343-3581.

Freelancers

PRODUCTION: Experienced Network Videographers with complete broadcast gear available for long or short term projects. We shoot News, Documentaries, Sports and Music Videos. Reasonable rates. Call Tony Brown (212) 949-0947.

SOUNDMAN: Extensive experience in features/documentaries. Great gear, will travel. Call for refs/credits. Doug, (212) 489-0232 (NYC).

AWARD-WINNING CINEMATOGRAPHER going to Italy in the summer of 1987. Save on travel and related expenses. Own 16mm equipment and crew; many options available. Renato Tonelli (718) 236-0153.

SOUND RECORDIST: Available for all types of projects: documentaries, narratives, shorts. Have complete sound package including Nagra 4.2, Schoeps super-cardioid, lavaliers, bloop lights, etc. Rates negotiable. Cathy Calderon, (212) 580-2075.

P.A. WITH VAN: Film school grad with experience on commercials, docs, industrials has VW van with running water, sink, ice box. Good personnel and/or equipment carrier. Dependable. References. Reasonable rates. N.Y. area. (718) 937-1290.

AWARD WINNING CAMERAMAN: Available for film or video projects. Experienced in documentaries, independent features, commercials, and industrials. Also available with Ikegami and full production package. For great rates, and a job well done, call Doron at (212) 620-9157.

VIDEOGRAPHER w/ 3/4" production package, including new Sony DXC-3000 CCD camera. Cheap rates, willing to travel. David Fish (201) 568-3112.

EXPERIENCED GAFFER available for interesting projects. Lighting packages, generator, location van and crew. Call for appointment. J. Anthony Productions (516) 294-1038.

PUBLICIST with several years experience as independent and working for major public relations firms will handle your total media campaign. Preproduction through New York and Los Angeles openings, including unit publicity. Press kits, press releases, and media campaigns for directors and actors also offered. Feature film credits include NYC openings of *Gringo, Before Stonewall, A Generation Apart, Musical Passage*, and *Gospel*. Television and celebrity pr also available. Professional, highly personalized service at reasonable rates. Marketing and advertising consultation provided. Jeffrey Wise Publicity, 507 E. 12th St., #2B, NYC 10009, (212) 460-8373.

YOU NEED ME ON YOUR NEXT PROJECT: Experienced Assistant Director, Well-Organized Script Supervisor, Energetic Production Assistant, Detailed Continuity, Resourceful & Creative Props and Set Design... Interested in film/tape projects, pre-production, production and post-production. Willing to travel or work in NYC area. Have valid drivers license & passport, and a sense of humor. Will consider all offers. Please call Otie Brown (212) 645-0619.

VIDEOGRAPHER/DANCER: Consultation and production services for dancers and related fields in the arts. Low-budget broadcast production pkg. incl. DXC M3 camera; 1/2" documentation of rehearsals; 3/4" editing, $20/hr; dubbing $12/hr. Penny Ward/Video (212) 228-1427; 529-7988.

STUDENT WANTS PA WORK: Summer '87. Will travel. Prefer live action. Exp: 6 16mm films (NYU) sum '86 and worked for film animator Faith Hubley as PA. Please contact Shana Dressler, Bx 1608, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 (914) 473-6006.

FULL SERVICE MEDIA CONSULTANT: Complete fundraising, marketing and production-related consulting services for film and video producers, directors, writers. Editing scripts/treatments; pitching; proposals for gov't agencies, foundations, corporations, individuals, international markets; film prospectuses and company business plans. Power resumes and career strategies. Barbara Sirota Productions. (212) 213-1326.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY with critically acclaimed films in the United States and Europe. Reels are available for documentary as well as narrative work. Full Aaton camera package with super 16 gate. My rate will fit your budget. Let's talk. (212) 475–1947.

Postproduction

BROADCAST QUALITY VIDEO EDITING with special effects. $35/hour hands–on rate. Sony BVU–800 series editing decks, Convergence 90 controller, fades, slo–mo, freeze–frames, Chyron graphics. With editor, $55/hour plus graphics. Convergence training, 3/4" & VHS transfer– duplications, $15/half–hour, in–house voiceover, location production packages. Lincoln Center area. HDTV Enterprises, (212) 874–4524.

16MM FLATBEDS FOR RENT: 6–plate flatbeds for rent in your work space or fully equipped downtown editing room with 24–hour access. Cheapest rates in NYC for independent filmmakers. Call Philmaster Productions, (212) 873–4470.

NEGATIVE MATCHING:16mm, super 16, 35mm cut for regular printing, blowup, or video transfer. Credits include Jim Jarmusch, Wim Wenders & Yvonne Rainer. Reliable results at reasonable rates. ONE WHITE GLOVE, Tim Brennan, (718) 897-4145, NYC.

MOVIOLA M-77 FLATBEDS FOR RENT: 6-plate flatbeds for rent in your workspace or downtown editing room with 24 hr. access. Cheapest rates in

NYC for independent filmmakers. Call Philmaster Productions (212) 873-4470.

BOB BRODSKY AND TONI TREADWAY: Super 8 and 8mm film-to-video mastering with scene-by-scene color correction to 3/4", 1" and high speed components. By appointment only. Call (617) 666-3372.

SOUND TRANSFERS: 16/35mm, 24/25/30 fps, center, edge, and multi track, TIME CODE capable, state of the art equipment (includes Time Code Stereo and Mono Nagras). Evening and weekend service available, convenient downtown location. Discount to AIVF and NABET members and for grant funded projects. Downtown Transfer/Billy Sarokin; (212) 255-8698.

8 PLATE STEENBECK: full 16mm editing facilities, 24 hour access. Daily, weekly or long-term rentals. Call Carolyn (212) 925-1500.

STEENBECK FOR RENT: Low monthly rates. Delivered to workspace. Octavio (718) 855-8366. Also Arri-S for Sale w Cannon macro-zoom 12-120 with tripod. Make offer. Pat Maxam (607) 277-4182.



NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., March 8 for the May issue. Send notices to Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Films • Tapes Wanted

PRODUCTION/MARKETING COMPANY w/ in-house legal staff seeks completed video programs w/ appeal to home-viewers &/or schools & libraries (e.g., how-to/instructional; educ.; entertainment). We will find, negotiate & supervise distribution deals on your behalf for a %. Contact Bennu Productions, Inc., 165 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016; (212) 213-8511.

MEDIAMIX is accepting original video, film & computer work for cable TV series to be aired beg. in late winter/spring '87. Fictional, nonnarrative, experimental & abstract work accepted. Submissions must be on 3/4" video (VHS/Beta conditionally accepted), not to exceed 23 min. r.t. Send tapes to Dak/MEDIAMIX Cableshow, c/o Falcon Video Studios, 271 Cleveland Ave., Highland Park, NJ 08904; (201) 247-4720.

FROM HERE TO HOLLYWOOD: 30 min. live TV on Manhattan Cable Ch. J will showcase short works. 15 min. max r.t. Works critiqued & filmmaker invited for on-air interview. Begs. in Oct. Write Paul Anthony, From Here to Hollywood, 274 Schoolhouse Rd., Jamesburg, NJ 08831; (201)521-4431.

At NEW WORLD VIDEO EXHIBITION: Video Inn seeks videotapes & info on Asian video artists & ind. prods. living in the New World. Will be a part of the Asian-Pacific Festival in Vancouver during June '87.*Video Guide* will also publish the Asian New World issue incl. articles, reviews, info & biblio/videographies. Writers, contributors welcome. No entry fee. Artists/writers fees will be paid. Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact Video Inn, 261 Powell St., Vancouver, BC V6A 1G3, Canada; (604) 688-4336.

WORKING FREQUENCIES: Radio prod. team seeks audio/radio programs about work-related issues for upcoming guide & listening workshops. For more info write Working Frequencies, 291 Smith St., Brooklyn, NY 11231.

NEW DAY FILMS: Self-distrib. coop for independent prods. seeks new members w/ recent social issue docs. Priority areas: culture, environment, family, gay/lesbian, health, handicapped, labor, minority. Also progressive films for young people. App. deadline: May 1. For info, write Ralph Arlyck, 79 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

Conferences • Workshops

HALLWALLS VIDEO EDITING: Workshops offered on a regular basis to introduce new users to Hallwalls' video edit. facility. Incl. 3/4" editing w/ add. Beta & VHS playback. Avail. by proposal to upstate independent artists' projects. Contact Hallwalls at least 1 wk before scheduled workshops, held twice monthly. Limited enrollment, early registration encouraged. Contact Hallwalls, 700 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

PRODUCTION UNIT WORKSHOP: Sponsored by Newark Mediaworks Mar. 24-Apr. 11. Designed to teach students w/ some video experience short docs & fictional videos. Provides hands-on training from pre-prod. to shooting & editing. Meets Tues., 6:30-9 pm & Sats. 12-4 pm. Fee: $140. Contact Newark Mediaworks, Box 1716, 60 Union St., Newark, NJ 07101; (201) 690-5474.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS: Advanced training for media professionals, incl. prod. mgmt., directing, screenwriting, A/B roll techniques in video edit. & employment strategies. Scholarship assistance may be avail. for minorities. Contact F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

INT'L FILM & TV WORKSHOPS: Feb., Mar. & Apr. in Ojai, CA. Incls. workshops on camera, steadicam, video prod., script & continuity, lighting cinematography, set design, casting, acting for film & tape, scriptwriting, prod. mgmt., film direction, electronic cinematography, wilderness docs, acting techniques for directors, video editing, feature film editing & TV commercials. Contact Int'l Film & TV Workshops, Rockport, ME 04856; (207) 236-8581.

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HDTV '87 COLLOQUIUM: 3rd int'l conf. on new TV systems will be held in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada Oct. 5-8. Forum for leaders in the TV community to discuss development & implications of higher quality TV. Call for papers deadline: March 1987. Write Metin Akgun, prog. chair-HDTV '87, Dept. of Communications, 300 Slater St., Ottawa, Ont., Canada, K1A 0C8; (613) 990-4669, Telex: 053-3342. Registration: Secretariat-HDTV '87, c/o Conference Coll Inc., 1138 Sherman Dr., Ottawa, Ont. Canada K2C 2M4; (613) 224-1741.

AFI SPRING WORKSHOPS: Los Angeles: Art of Cinematography, Mar. 21-22; Financing Options for Motion Pic Prod., Mar. 28; Santa Barbara, CA: Director's Seminar at Santa Barbara Film Fest, Mar. 4-8; NYC: Video Distr. Options for Videomakers, Mar.14; Boston: Intro to Film & TV Prod. Research, Mar.7; Chicago: Nuts & Bolts of Preprod., Mar. 14; Art of Film Direction, Mar. 21-22; Seattle: Screenwriting, Mar. 7; Acting for the Camera, Mar. 20-22; Washington, DC: Screenwriting, Mar. 21-22; Miami: Financing & Marketing Ind. Film & Video, Mar. 14. Contact Public Service Programs, AFI, Box 27999, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (800) 221-6248 or (213) 856-7690.

Opportunities • Gigs

POSITION OPEN: Video instructor & director video lab, California Institute of the Arts. FT, beg. July 1 or Aug. 15. 1-yr contract w/ possible renewal. Salary negotiable. Must teach introductory video class as well as advanced media critique, able to work w/ grad & undergrad students. Substantial exhibition/prod. record required. Knowledge of film & film history/ theory preferred. Women & minorities strongly urged to apply. Write Catherine Lord, dean, School of Art, CalArts, 24700 McBean Pkwy., Valencia, CA 91355.

VIDEO ARTIST POSITION: UC San Diego Visual Arts Dept. Will teach artistic & critical & tech. skills to beginners & advanced students & lecture on historical development of the medium. Tenure-trk asst. prof. or possibly early assoc. prof. level position avail. beg. 1987-88 academic yr. Rank & salary commensurate w/ qualifications & experience. Deadline for app: Mar. 31. Write Allan Kaprow, chairperson, Visual Arts (B-027), UC San Diego, La Jolla, CA 92093.

SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIV: Cinema Dept. has 2 tenure trk openings. Asst. prof. in film prod., beg. Aug. 31. Salary range: $26-31,000. Assoc. or full prof. w/ admin. assignment as chair, beg. Aug. 31. Salary range: $39,168-49,548 (w/ increase expected in 1987-88). App. deadline for both positions: Mar. 2. Send app. to Margo Kasdan, chair, Dept. of Cinema, 1600 Holloway Ave., San Francisco, CA 94132.

FACULTY POSITION IN VIDEO: School of the Art Institute of Chicago Video Dept. seeks asst. prof., tenure trk, available for fall semester 1987. FT teaching position w/ specialization required in new video technology & systems. Work w/ grad & undergrad students. MFA, FT teaching experience & exhibition record required. App. deadline: Mar. 1. Contact Martin Prekop, chair, Undergraduate Div., School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 280 S. Columbus Ave., Chicago, IL 60603.

MUSEUM EDUC. DIRECTOR position available at American Museum of the Moving Image. Will plan & present programs, write & administer grants, train & supervise docents & develop educ. materials for varied constituency. Also serve as liaison w/ NYC Board of Ed, develop network of public & private school teachers to serve as curriculum consultants, speak at public mtgs, collaborate on projects w/ museum curatorial & programming staff & recruit instructors. Salary commensurate w/ experience. Write Rochelle Slovin, Director, Amer. Museum of the Moving Image, 34-12 36th St., Astoria, NY 11106.

EXPERIENCED PRODUCER WANTED to raise funds for feature doc about famous artists. Call (212) 627-2464, NYC.

INDEPENDENT PRODUCER/DIRECTOR looking for feature-length script. Comedy or love story, rural backdrop preferred w/ gay leads. Not interested in erotic scripts or coming out stories. P.o.v.s desired. Simple plot w/ extensive character development. Send treatment or script to Centaur Prod., Box 504, 308 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

MILLION DOLLAR MOVIES, div. of Brisun Entertainment, interested in low budget projects for prod. in 1987. Seeking writers &/or completed scripts in action/ horror, action/adventure, sci-fi/fantasy & teen comedy areas. $1- to $2-million budget range. Also looking for production teams. Writers: do not send scripts; inquire for release form. 1st-time directors considered if they come w/ strong script with developable concept. Production mgrs./line producers must have low-budget feature experience. 1st-time feature DPs w/ strong commercial or music video reels considered. No calls or drop-ins. Send resumés, tapes (3/4" preferred) w/ SASE to Million Dollar Movies, Studio Ten, #10, 32 W. 31st St., New York, NY 10001.

POSITION AVAILABLE: Assistant professor telecommunications/video production, full-time, fall 1987. Teach introductory and advanced production. Emphasis on portable video and local cable TV production. Cable TV access facility located on campus. Production exp. required. Ph.D. or ABD preferred. Salary: $22,000-24,000. Deadline: March 15. Send resumé to John Giancola, director of Telecommunications, Humanities Division, Univ. of Tampa, Tampa, FL 33606.

Publications • Software

GET THE MONEY & SHOOT: Guide to funding doc films, by Bruce Jackson & Diane Christian. Price: $20 plus $2 postage & handling. NYS residents add sales tax. From Documentary Research Inc., 96 Rumsey Rd., Buffalo, NY 14209.

16SR BOOK: A GUIDE TO THE SYSTEM, handbook on Arriflex 16SR for camera assts. & owners, w/ complete asst.'s manual for prep, use & maintenance techniques. Written by Jon Fauer, DP & Arri owner & published by Arriflex. Price: $14.95 plus $1.95 shipping & handling. Send check, money order or call w/ credit card: Arriflex Corp., 500 Rte. 303, Blauvelt, NY 10913; (914) 353-1400, TWX 7105752624, or FAX (914) 425-1250; in Los Angeles, 600 N. Victory Blvd., Burbank, CA 91502; (818) 841-7070, TLX 9104984641, or FAX (818) 848-4028.

THE NEXT WAVE: Special cover story of *San Francisco Focus: The City Magazine of the Bay Area*. Surveys film, video & theatre artists working in SF, incl. technical advances, int'l character, creative vision. Avail. from *San Francisco Focus*, 680 Eighth St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-2835.

INDEPENDENT JEWISH FILMS: 1st guide to films featured in the Jewish Film Festival incl.100 titles. $9, plus $1 shipping & handling; CA residents add 6% sales tax. Make check payable to Jewish Film Festival, 2600 10th St., Berkeley, CA 94710.

DEEP DISH DIRECTORY: Report on the lst nat'l public access satellite network, spring-summer 1986, which transmitted a 10-part series of grassroots video to public access stations nationwide. Incl. mailing lists of all participating public access stations, video producers & activists interested in ongoing programming exchanges & future satellite use. 96 pgs. Price now reduced dramatically to $5/ea. Contact Paper Tiger TV, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012.

ARTS AMERICA FINE ART FILM & VIDEO SOURCE BOOK, 1987, comprehensive catalog of fine art film & video docs. Price: $12.95 plus $2 postage & handling. In CT incl. 7–1/2% sales tax. ArtsAmerica, 125 Greenwich Ave., Greenwich, CT 06830.

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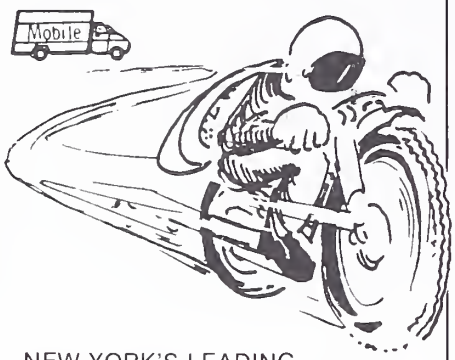
The concerns of artists, independent producers, administrators, programmers, distributors, and representatives of state and private funding institutions will be addressed in this one day seminar organized by independent producer and media consultant MARIE CIERI. Focusing on current trends and issues in independent video distribution, the seminar will feature presentations made by the most active distributors of independent video, by their clients in both established and emerging markets (art and educational institutions, travelling exhibition services, broadcast and cable television, home video and videodiscs, and public and private collections); and by the artists and other independent producers who have not only been affected by, but have helped shape, current distribution patterns.

Guest speakers confirmed at press time include:
LOIS BIANCHI, Director of Programming, WNET-TV
NANCY HOLT, independent producer and media consultant
MARY LUCIER, video artist
ROBIN O'HARA, head of video distribution for The Kitchen
STEVE SAVAGE, President, New Video
LORI ZIPPAY, Director of Electronic Art Intermix

To register (VISA or Mastercard), please call The American Film Institute at (800) 221-6248 or (213) 856-7690, 9:30 am - 5:30 pm, Pacific Time.

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manship Center. Compedium of sources & resources for managers & staff of nonprofit organizations. Contact the Grantsmanship Center, *Whole Nonprofit Catalog*, 650 S. Spring St., Ste. 507, Box 6210, Los Angeles, CA 90014.

ART LAW: Source book on the rights & liabilities of art creators & collectors, by Franklin Feldman & Stephen E. Weil. Two hardcover volumes, $160. Little, Brown & Co. Law Division, 34 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02018.

URBAN INSTITUTE REPORT: *The New York Nonprofit Sector in a Time of Retrenchment* now avail. from the Foundation Center. Draws from a major survey conducted during the early 1980s. Price: $10 plus $2 postage & handling. Make checks payable to the Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10003; (800) 424-9836

THE ART OF FILING: *Tax Workbook for Visual, Performing, Literary Artists & Other Self-employed Professionals* now avail. Price: $9.95. Contact Resources & Counseling, 416 Landmark Ctr., 75 W. 5th St., St. Paul, MN 55102; (612) 292-4381.

SOUTH CAROLINA FILM CATALOG: South Carolina Arts Commission Media Arts Center's 16mm Film Collection of Independent Shorts catalog now avail. Incl. comprehensive list of programs & booking info. Contact SCAC Media Arts Ctr., 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 734-8684.

AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS: 1986 Fall/Winter Books Catalog incl. subjects in arts & technology, marketing & fundraising, individual artists resources, arts mgmt., arts & educ., cultural planning & arts issues. Contact ACA, Dept. 17, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., Area M, New York, NY 10019.

Resources • Funds

NAT'L ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Projects in Media deadline: Mar. 20. Contact James Dougherty; (202) 786-0278.

NAT'L ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS: App. deadline: Mar. 13. Arts Management Fellowships to arts administrators at the Endowment offices in Wash. DC. Deadline: Apr. 17. Contact NEA Visual Arts Program, (202) 682-5448.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING Open Solicitations deadline: May 1, 1987. Contact CPB, Program Fund, 1111 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

FILM BUREAU: Grants avail. to nonprofit NYS–based organizations for exhibition programs. Supports wide variety of programs, from annual film fests to special screenings at local libraries, galleries & community centers. Matching funds of up to $300 avail. for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Priority given to organizations showing works by ind. filmmakers &/or films not ordinarily avail. to the public. Deadlines: June 15, Aug. 15. Contact F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

FILM IN THE CITIES: Regional grants available to film/video artists residing in IA, MN, ND, SD & WI. Max. request of $16,000 for new works & $6,500 for completion. Deadline: Apr. 3. App. workshops avail. in each state. Contact Film in the Cities; (612) 646-6104.

LOUISIANA DIVISION OF THE ARTS: Individual Artists Program grants in all disciplines. Deadline: Mar. 2. Applicant must be LA residents for at least 2 yrs. Contact Louisiana Div. of the Arts, Box 44247, Baton Rouge, LA 70804; (504) 925-3930.

PHILADELPHIA INDEPENDENT FILM/VIDEO ASSN. SUBSIDY GRANTS: Avail. to members of PIFVA; funds provided by the PA Council on the Arts. Funds awarded for specific, targeted services vital to the project's completion, performed at below commercial rates. Average grants $250-500. Deadlines: Apr. 1 & June 1. For apps., contact PIFVA, Int'l House, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 387-5125.

RISCA APPLICATION DEADLINES: Mini-Grant proposals & Project Support proposals, Mar. 2. Individual Artists Fellowships, Mar. 16. Contact Rhode Island Council on the Arts, Mini-Grant Program, (401) 277-3880.

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS: Proposal deadline for all programs, incl. Film, Television/Media & Special Arts Services, March 1. Contact NYSCA, 915 Broadway, New York, NY 10010.

WOMEN'S STUDIO WORKSHOP: Postprod. residency for women filmmakers. Facilities incl. 6-plate flatbed moviola, synchronizer & squawk box & moviescope. Up to $250 for materials. Contact Women's Studio Workshop, Box V, Rosendale, NY 12472; (914) 658-9133.

FULLBRIGHT SCHOLAR PROGRAM: Grants in communications & journalism still available. Scholars in all academic ranks eligible to apply. Should have Ph.D., college or univ. teaching experience & evidence of scholarly activity. U.S. citizenship required. Contact CIES, 11 Dupont Circle, NW, Ste. 300, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 939-5401.

Trims & Glitches

KUDOS to Nina Menkes, whose first feature film *Magdalena Viraga* was named Best Independent/Experimental Film of 1986 by the Los Angeles Critics Association.

CONGRATULATIONS to winners of the 1986 Student Film Awards from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences: Cathey Edwards, documentary achievement awards; Peg McClure Moudy, animation achievement award; Lauren Lazin, documentary merit award & Sheila M. Sofian, animation merit award.

CONGRATULATIONS to Theresa Tollini for her film *Breaking Silence*, winner of the Bronze Hugo from the Chicago Int'l Film Festival & Special Jury Award from Hemisfilm Int'l Festival. *Breaking Silence* will be broadcast on PBS Mar. 1, 10 pm, EST.

THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS MEANS:

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KUDOS to David Sutherland, whose documentary *Jack Levine: Feast of Pure Reason* has won the Gold Plaque Award at the Chicago Int'l Film Festival, a CINE Golden Eagle & a Chris Bronze Plaque Award at the Film Council of Greater Columbus.

CONGRATULATIONS: Among the 16m dramatic film finalists selected for the 1987 United States Film Festival are AIVF members Rachid Kerdouche, *Her Name is Lisa;* Steven Okazaki, *Living on Tokyo Time*; Philip Hartman, *No Picnic*; Tim Hunter, *River's Edge*; Jill Godmilow, *Waiting for the Moon* & Lizzie Borden, *Working Girls.*

KUDOS to "Open Channels" award winners exhibited at Long Beach Museum of Art: Ed Jones, Jeane Finley, John Arvanites, Tony Labat & David Stout.

CONGRATULATIONS to winners of the 1986 Massachusetts Artists Fellowship Program awards from the Artists Foundation: Laurel Chiten, David Bruce Roderick, Alia Arasoughly, Dasal Banks, Ellen I. Segring, Julia Willis, Alexandra Anthony, Daniel Barnett, John Junkerman, Ross McElwee, Enrique Oliver & Elizabeth Hope Shaw.

CONGRATULATIONS to the New York State Council on the Arts grantees in Media Production: Fred Bacher, Burt Barr, Judith Barry, David Behrman, David Blair, James Byrne, Amy Chen, Ying Chan & Richard Gong, Tony Cokes, Lee Eiferman, Matthew Geller, Tami Gold, Annie Goldson & Chris Bratton, Claudia Gould, Julie Gustafson, DeeDee Halleck, Julia Keydel, Thomas Lopez, Mary Lucier, Mary McFerran & Diane Torr, Ginger Miles, Phil Niblock, Terry O'Reilly, Liz Phillips, Daniel Riesenfeld, Jackie Sauter, Richard Schmiechen, Lisa Seidenberg, Jonathan Sinaiko, Scott Sinkler & Sachiko Hamada, Francesc Torres & Edin Velez.

CONGRATULATIONS to the New York State Council on the Arts grantees in Film Production: Mark Berger, Scott Billingsley, Stephanie Black, Power Boothe, Olivia Carrescia, Ping Chong, Pamela Cohen, Ghasem Ebrahimian, Allan Francovich, Su Friedrich, DeeDee Halleck & Penny Bender, Sally Heckel, Lisa Hsia, Lewis Klahr, Theodore Life, Jennie Livingston, Babette Mangolte, Sheila McLaughlin, Meredith Monk, Frank Moore & Jim Self, Frank & Caroline Mouris, Mark Rappaport, Debra Robinson, Peggy Stern, Lynne Tillman, Dan Walworth, Josh Waletzky & Marco Williams.

THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES has established a public access screening facility for media projects in the humanities at their offices, 198 Broadway, 10th fl., NYC.

IMAGE FILM/VIDEO CENTER in Atlanta has established a new on-line program with 11 companies: ASV Video, Atlanta Video, Crawford Communications, Editworks, Lighting & Production Equipment, Threshhold Productions, Video Media Inc., the Camera Department, Thompson/Berg Teleproductions, Showcase Audio Video & Doug Hall & Associates.

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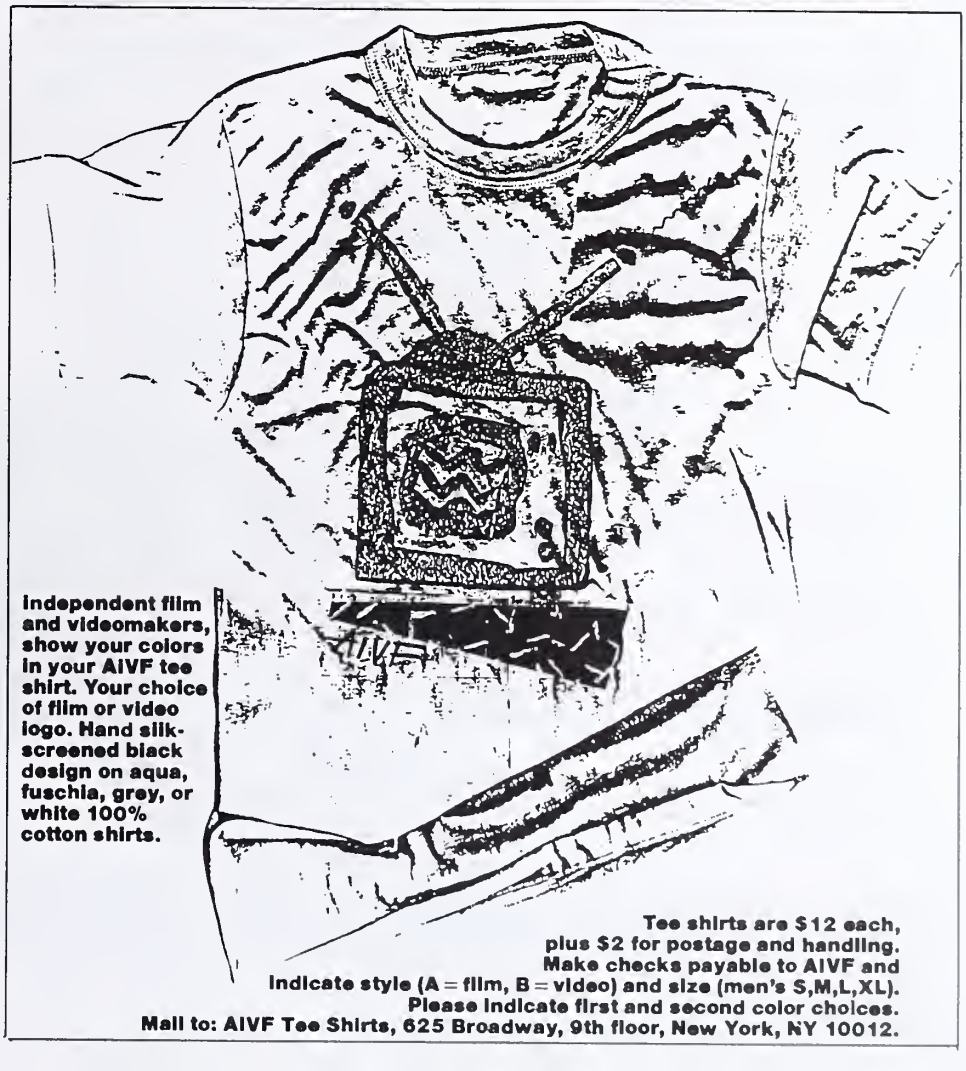
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CORRECTIONS

The Downtown Community TV Center received a $50,000 grant from the MacArthur Foundation, not $15,000 as reported in the "Media Clips" column of the January/February issue.

In the December 1986 issue, Pacific Arts, a home video distribution company mentioned in "Reels of Fortune: Video Software Dealers Meet," was inaccurately reported as curtailing acquisition of feature and documentary material. Pacific Arts says they will soon release new titles in these categories, such as a cassette edition of Agnes Varda's *Vagabond* and several video productions from the Kitchen, in addition to publishing their new video magazine, *Overview*.

CANADIAN & MEXICAN MEMBERS, PLEASE NOTE

Annual AIVF individual membership fees for Canada and Mexico are now $45. Student memberships in those countries are $30. Library and organization membership fees are $60 and $85, respectively. Postage rates outside the U.S. and Puerto Rico make these increases necessary. We regret the price hikes and will continue working to make up the difference in the quality of our efforts.

WELCOME ABOARD

The board of directors of the Foundation for Independent Video and Filmmakers (FIVF) is pleased to announce the appointment of four new board members, each of whom brings to the board significant experience and expertise that will complement the work of its elected members.

Adrianne Benton, director of the International Television Group at Children's Television Workshop and a member of the board of directors of the Benton Foundation, will apply her managerial skills and foundation experience to FIVF's institutional development. **Lisa Frigand**, community relations officer at the Con Edison company of New York and an enthusiastic supporter of the arts, will help FIVF develop its corporate funding base. **Richard Lorber**, a founder of Fox/Lorber Associates, a syndication and distribution company, and a founding member of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, looks forward to helping FIVF develop its marketing expertise. **Steve Savage**, founder of New Video, a home video minichain in New York City, will also help FIVF develop its marketing and membership strategies.

"The appointment of these outstanding individuals to the FIVF board of directors is the most significant institutional development of 1986, and perhaps for the last few years, for FIVF," said executive director Lawrence Sapadin at the board's December meeting. "Each has a history of interest and involvement in FIVF's work, as well as substantial expertise outside our field," Sapadin said. "They will be a joy to work with."

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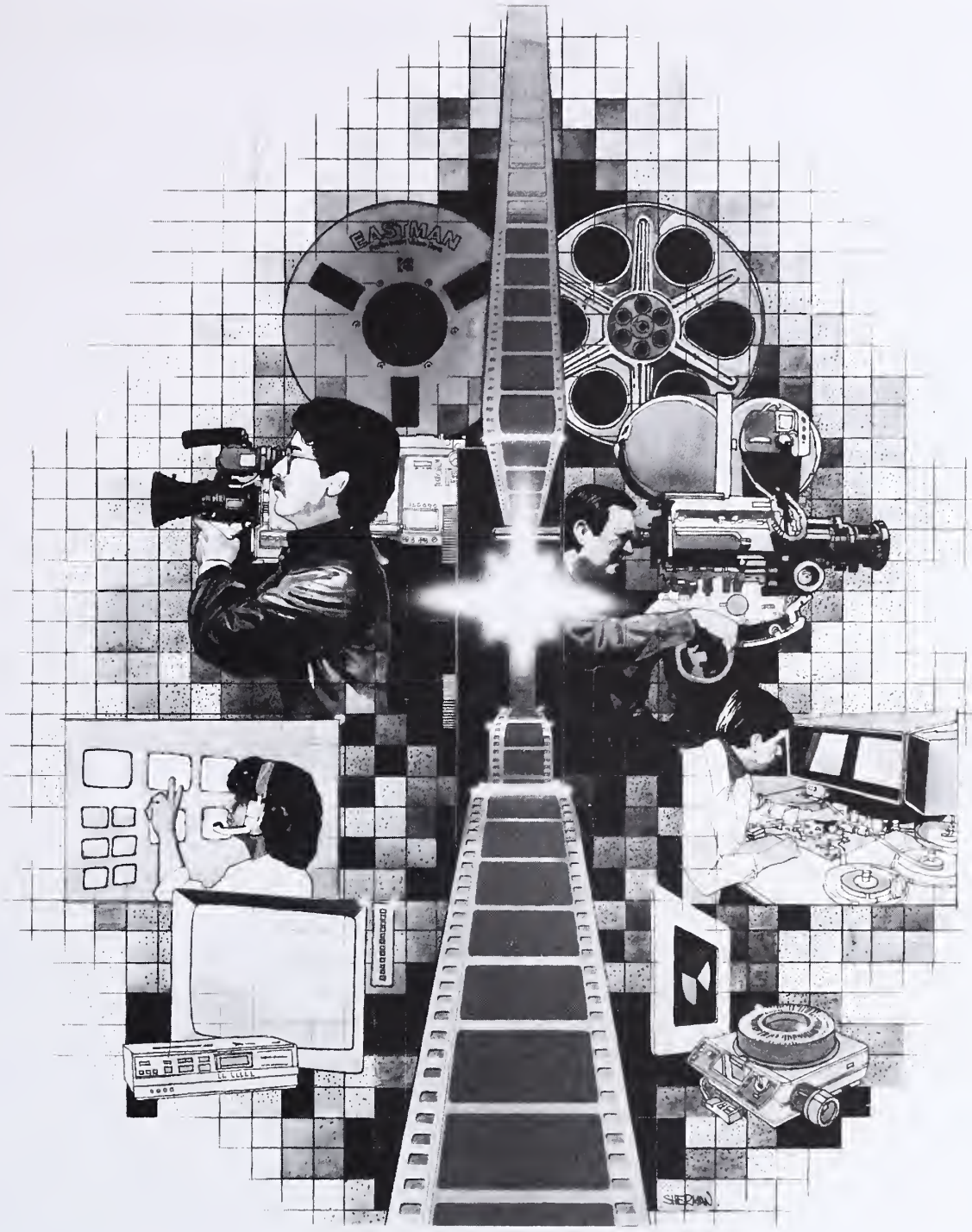
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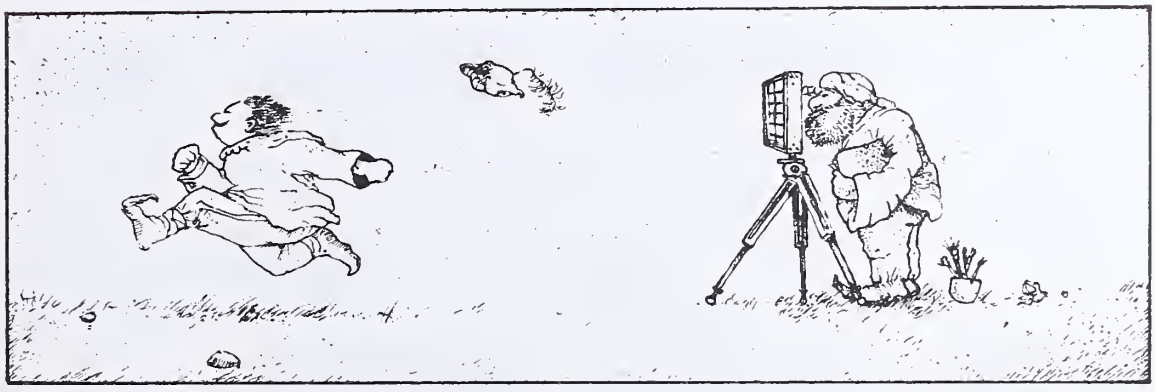
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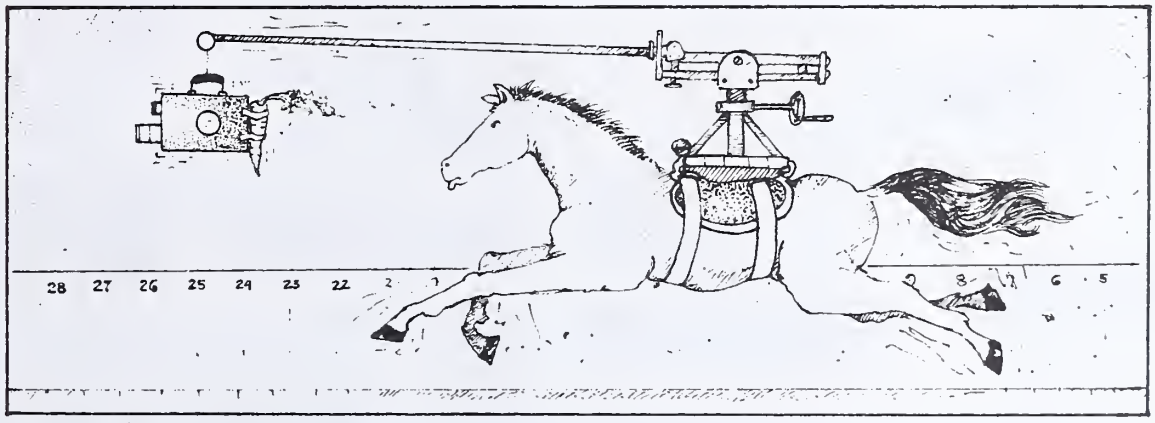
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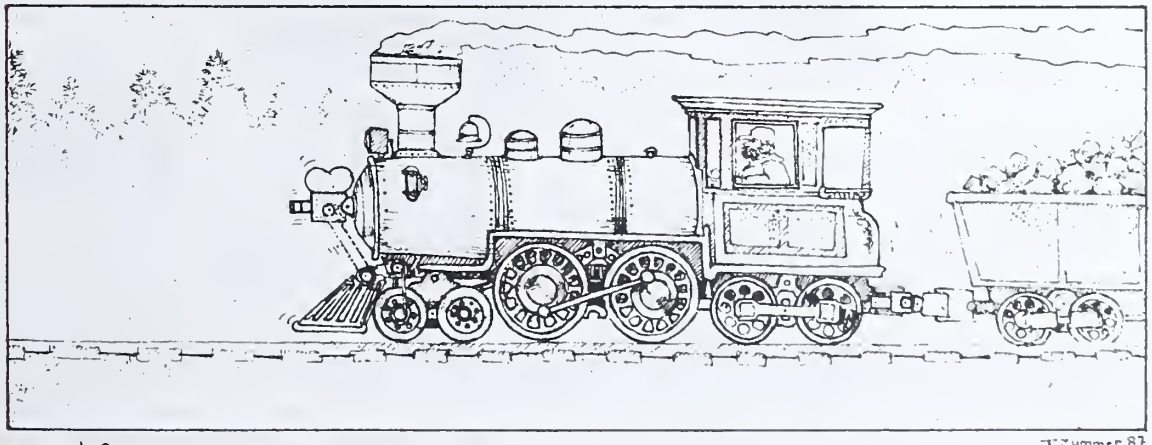
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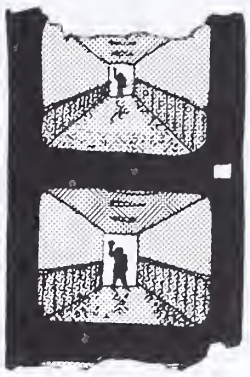
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"Wave-Bye-Bye"
-Michael Snow

COVER: For some movie-lovers, cinema is an invention foreshadowed by age-old attempts to materialize illusions. And the most serious proponents of film have often been the avant-gardists. In this issue, Thomas Zummer takes liberties with some of the revered classics of our avant-garde film legacy—from the work of founding fathers like Buñuel and Eisensten to that of their prolific progeny to recent feminist titles. Zummer lives and works in New York City. When not studying philosophy, he watches movies, makes cartoons, and tells himself jokes.

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LETTER

To the editor:

Although Marc Weiss has brokered the work of independent producers for many years, he'll have to take more principled positions than those he took in "Package Deal: A New Documentary Series" ["Media Clips," December 1986] if he wants to continue to do so. When speaking of the possible series content he stated, "I don't know if we'd put [*When the Mountains Tremble*] on in [the series'] first year. I want to build up trust with the [PBS] stations. Initially I don't want to program something that will make them run for the hills." This kind of thinking has often been PBS's rationale for exclusion of excellent documentaries. What about films like *The Making of Sun City* or *Dark Circle*, both excluded from PBS airwaves? Will Weiss wait for an appropriately acceptable climate to present documentaries like these? Will that time ever come if we continue to practice such self-censorship?

The strengh of the independent documentary film movement has been in its unblinking portrayal of events in a responsible way and without regard to PBS's approval. This is inherent in the concept of "independent." While we strongly support the idea of a new documentary series on public televison, it must be pursued to include the independent community's strongest and most creative documentaries without regard to form or content.

—Pamela Yates, Peter Kinoy, Tom Siegel
producers of *When the Mountains Tremble*

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THREATS TO AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN BROADCASTING

General Electric takes over NBC; Ted Turner tries to buy out CBS; toymakers sell sell sell to wide-eyed tots on hour-long TV episodes. TV plunges to its record worst. What's left on the agenda of communications deregulation? In a move that defied history and social responsibility, the Federal Communications Commission last September declared its own affirmative action policies unconstitutional. In a legal brief filed with the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., the agency repudiated its long-standing policies of preference towards minorities and women in granting broadcasting licenses. The courts were asked to examine whether such preferential practices are constitutional and within the agency's statutory authority. Approved by the commissioners, the brief concluded that preferential policies "are discriminatory classifications by the government that are inherently suspect, presumptively invalid and subject to scrutiny under the equal protection guarantee implicit in the due process clause of the Fifth Amendment."

The FCC's brief was submitted in connection with a case in which the agency is being questioned for granting an FM broadcasting license to Dale Bell, a resident of St. Simons Island, Georgia. The FCC had chosen Bell over her male contender, James Steele, who was better qualified and had agreed to move to the island if granted the license. Steele challenged the FCC's ruling, arguing that Bell, as a woman, was actually fronting for her father and husband who were the intended investors and owners of the station in question. In August 1985, the D.C. Circuit Court overruled the FCC decision on the Steele case, affirming that the agency had overstepped its legal authority in granting preference to Dale Bell. In September 1986, however, a full appeals court vacated this decision and asked the FCC to reexamine the legality of such preferential practices.

In the September brief, the FCC maintained that its preferential policies should be scrapped because it had no record of past racial or sexual discrimination. Moreover, it questioned whether awarding preferences to minority groups and women directly achieved the FCC's goal of diversifying programming. The agency claims no record of such correlation.

Critics argue that because the agency did not mandate racial and sexual discrimination in the past does not mean it does not need preferential policies now; discrimination is deeply imbedded in the social structure. Since only 1.8 percent of the 12,000 television and radio stations are owned by minorities, isn't there a need for preference in license granting? Even if these policies do not directly diversify programming, the agency that upholds affirmative action has opened doors which were previously closed to minority groups.

The FCC's plan to reverse its preferential practices came as no surprise to those familiar with the Reagan-appointed commission. Mark Fowler, chair of the commission, has been famously loyal to such Reaganite principles as free-market competition and easing of government controls. With Fowler at the FCC, the communications industry's deregulation has contributed to the recent rise in corporate takeover rates, increased telephone charges, and the decline of program quality. Said Fowler: "[We] rely on competition, not government, to regulate the telecommunications industry." Critics complain that the "public interest" cited in the Communications Act of 1934—the enabling legislation for the FCC—has become limited to entrepreneurs' interest. Broadcasters have been replaced by investors who trade licenses as commodities. Free market competition in broadcasting is dubious when limited channels require some controls to ensure responsible public service.

Other FCC actions threaten minority participation in the broadcast industry. By expanding the limits on the number of stations that a single entity can own, the FCC strengthened monopolies and reduced entry prospects for minorities. And with fewer rules governing broadcasting practices, existing owners have fewer chances of losing their licenses. Previously, licensees who were in trouble could sell their stations for 75 percent of their original value in order to avoid costly defense proceedings. These "distress sales" were a popular means by which minorities could buy stations.

Fowler does not believe racial discrimination to be a barrier to minority entrance into broadcasting. Instead, he blames the lack of minority capital (hard and human). Fowler has said that he does not believe in preferences "based on skin color" and considers them discriminatory. Noting that affirmative action may be unconstitutional, he says he prefers other means of upgrading minority participation.

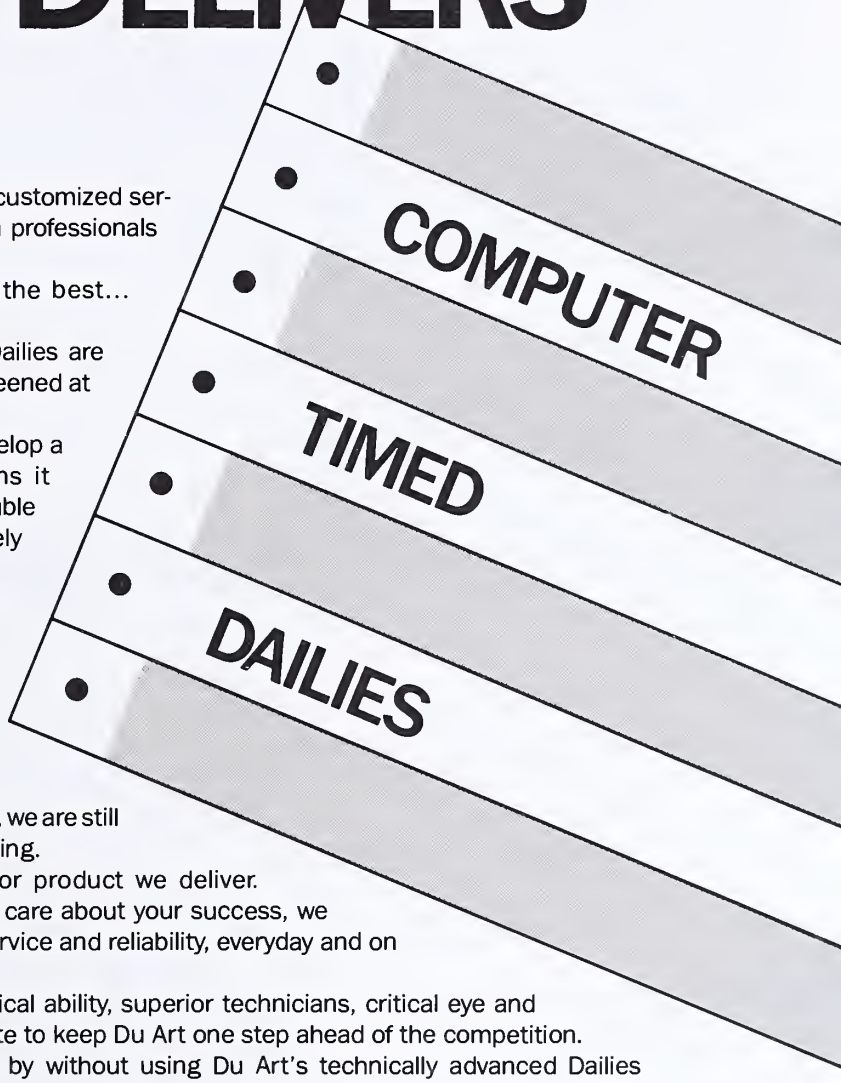
Critics of Fowler and the FCC's recent brief range from media advocacy organizations to minority interest groups to members of Congress. While the impact of the FCC's brief may not be immediately noticeable, its implications are far-reaching for federal as well as private industry decision-making processes. "The agency's argument against the constitutionality—not merely the wisdom—of the minority ownership program would support evisceration of *Brown vs. Board of Education* as well as congressional enactments that put an end to discrimination in public accommodations and employment," wrote Tyrone Brown, a former FCC commissioner.

Interest groups have quickly mobilized in opposition to the FCC's brief. Twelve organizations representing black and Hispanic groups have applied for permission from the Federal Court to enter the case. "We're ready to go to war," declared Pluria Marshall, of the National Black Media Coalition, a powerful activist group whose victories for minority preference have been effective within the broadcasting industry. Henry Geller, former FCC general counsel, has called on broadcasters to gather evidence of diversified programming created by increased minority ownership. The National Organization for Women, along with other women's groups, has asked a full court to review the case, arguing that preferences towards women (added to FCC licensing policies in 1978) are needed to assure fair representation of women.

Equally adamant are a number of members of Congress. That the FCC went directly to the courts instead of rescinding its own preference policies proves its motives in circumventing Congress, the legislative body to which it is accountable. Some congressional leaders, including Rep. Mickey Leland (D-Texas and chair of the Congressional Black Caucus), plan to introduce legislation that would mandate preference policies. "It's appalling. Most minorities and women who own stations own them because of the minority preference policy. To reverse the policy denies them future opportunities," claimed Leland. Reversal "forces a return to gloomy days when broadcasting ownership was a closed ship." "This is the Dred Scott decision of communications law," added Rep. Esteban Torres (D-California).

Although Fowler recently announced his resignation as FCC chair, his presumed successor, Dennis Patrick, has been equally vocal in

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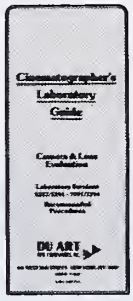
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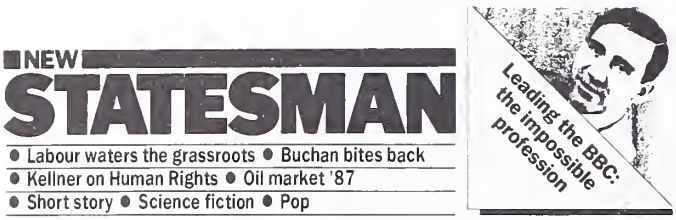
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his aversion to preference policies and could very well continue the drive against them. However, he will have to battle a Democrat-dominated Congress and the determined lobbying of various groups.

QUYNH THAI

THE SECRET SOCIETY IN ACTION: BBC RAIDED

Less than two weeks after international journalists gathered in London to confer on press censorship, Great Britain's own British Broadcasting Corporation was the victim of a raid on its Glasgow studio. The target of the 28-hour raid by Special Branch of Scotland Yard was the six-part series *The Secret Society*, produced by investigative reporter Duncan Campbell. At the heart of the controversy is one episode about Britain's $700-million plus Zircon project, a super-secret spy satellite that has the potential for monitoring communications from the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. The Thatcher government's involvement with the project violates a Ministry of Defence requirement that it inform the House of Commons' Public Accounts Committee of any major defense expenditures.

In mid-January, the BBC management had already bowed to governmental pressure to suppress the Zircon episode, citing possible breaches to national security. Even after producer Campbell subsequently published details of the Zircon documents in the *New Statesman*, the Thatcher government continued to oppose any further circulation of the information and threatened to exercise the sweeping Official Secrets Act of 1911, which is used to prosecute spies and people suspected of leaking confidential government information. When Campbell arranged a screening of the banned episode for selected members of Parliament, the government moved to stop it.

In late January, Scotland Yard agents searched the homes of Campbell and his assistants to investigate possible leaks, and occupied the *New Statesman* offices, confiscating numerous documents. The police failed twice to gain warrants to search the BBC's Glasgow facility, but finally struck on the third attempt. The result was a weekend raid that commenced on January 31 and ended with the seizure of two vanloads of footage and documents from the entire series, not only the Zircon episode. The other five programs dealt with Britain's failure to legislate a freedom of information law, the use of computerized personal data, governmental powers during a nuclear emergency, police powers, and the effectiveness of British radar systems.

The raid fueled immediate angry responses from the BBC. BBC chair Marmaduke Hussey, who was considered a Tory party-liner when appointed by Thatcher last October, issued a surprisingly strong protest that decried the seizure of material from the other five programs, and stated, "We shall, of course, take whatever legal action may be appropriate." The BBC was already reeling from the surprise resignation of its director general Alisdair Milne, officially for "personal reasons," but said to have been forced out by Hussey. Milne had been under attack from Conservatives in Parliament who criticized BBC for "anti-government, anti-American" reporting, particularly in its coverage of the U.S. bombing of Libya.

Immediately after the Glasgow raid, the House of Commons scheduled an emergency debate, which ended up as a rowdy battle between the Prime Minister and opposition MPs. However, Conservatives control the Commons, and Labour was not able to garner a vote for censure of the raid. In other sectors, the National Union of Journalists has urged a nationwide strike to protest the government's actions.

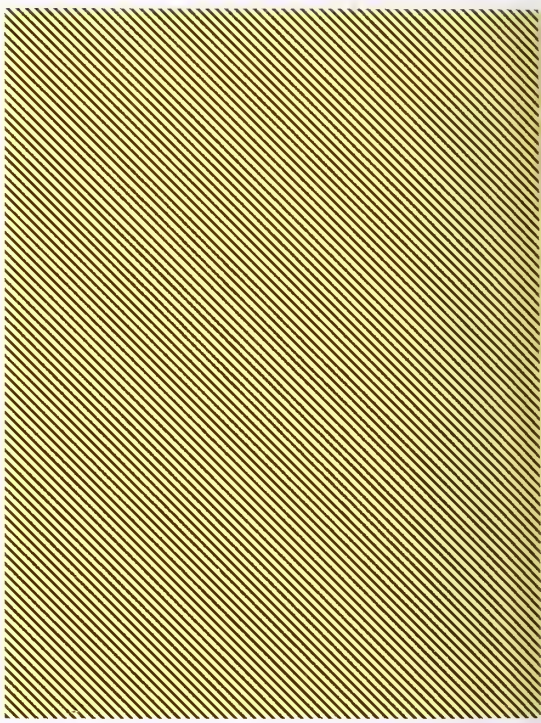
RENEE TAJIMA



Jamie Bosian in *A*, the winning student tape by Andre Burke that caused a stir at the National Video Festival.

Courtesy videomaker


FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
THE INDEPENDENT



NOW YOU SEE IT, NOW YOU DON'T

Most accounts of the apparently ho-hum 1986 National Video Festival, organized by the American Film Institute, noted one major controversy. Among the 25 tapes premiered at the Los Angeles event last December only three were produced by women. But another stir was caused when the festival staff chose for the first time in Festival history not to screen the winning student competition tape at the opening night awards ceremony. According to the festival catalogue, the tape, *A*, by Andre Burke, is "an exploration of fear, desire, and the other as manifested by the current AIDS crisis." It contains rapidly edited segments of colorized images of naked men, some engaged in oral sex. Burke said that he intentionally abstracted any images that could be considered "lurid."

According to Burke, festival director Steven Ricci informed him three months prior to the festival that the tape would "probably" be screened opening night. *A* was shown along with the regional winners at the student competition screenings. However, the day before the festival opened, Burke was told that, "due to time considerations," the eight-minute tape would not be shown at the awards ceremony. This is the one event that representatives of Sony, the Festival's funders, always attend.

The stakes are high for the American Film Institute. After all, a Sony PR person, originally approached the AFI about sponsoring a student video competition. After a series of negotiations and false starts, the first National Video Festival took place in 1981. Since then, Sony has continued to underwrite the festival and to provide substantial support for the AFI's Los Angeles campus. According to a former festival staffer, in 1983 both officials of Sony and the AFI were offended by Cindy Kleine's *Secrets of Cindy*, the winner in the "experimental" student category. Questions were raised as to whether the tape, which included a shot of a naked penis, truly represented the "best" student work.

Ricci adamantly denied that Burke's tape was censored in order to prevent another negative response from SONY. "It was simply because the evening was too long," he said of the two-and-a-half-hour event. He said that they considered excerpting the winning tapes, but decided that showing only clips was "damaging" to an experimental tape such as Burke's because it gave an "inappropriate picture of the work." As proof of the AFI's support for *A*, Ricci cited its inclusion in a selection of new American work that the AFI sent to the Turin Young Cinema Festival.

Despite Sony's interest in the student competition, the festival opened with Jean-Luc Godard's 90-minute *Grandeur et Décadence*

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d'un Petit Commerce de Cinéma d'apres un Roman instead of tapes by the student winners, as they have done in past years. Burke's prizes—a camera, deck, two monitors, and an edit controller—*were* displayed on opening night, but not the tape that earned them.

LUCINDA FURLONG

TV FROM THE RIO GRANDE TO TIERRA DEL FUEGO

Videomaker Karen Ranucci has assembled an extraordinary package of independent films and videos from Latin America entitled, *Democracy in Communication*. The collection of over 30 programs from nine countries is comprised mainly of works by Latin American producers about their own cultures and societies. The eight hours of material is dubbed on videocassette formats and offered at low cost to anyone who will show it.

Ranucci compiled the package during a year of travel throughout Latin America as a freelance videographer-journalist. The experience left her coolly unimpressed with the news-gathering practices of U.S. reporters, who imposed their own often insensitive perspectives. Says Ranucci, "After some time, I grew tired of hearing our own voices." Instead, she set about to collect the work of Latin Americans themselves—in Uruguay, Bolivia, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Panama.

The program she has put together reflects the range of popular Latin American media, influenced by varying stages of cultural development as well as political realities. A sampler of Mexican programs contrasts U.S. network imports that dominate the country's broadcasts with small-format tapes such as one about the ancient ritual of communal work produced by the Zapoteca Indians and a dramatic short about a woman evicted from one of Mexico City's cardboard barrios, made by Collectivo Cine Mujer, a coalition of women producers who work closely with poor

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AIVF would like to thank these companies for participating. Other firms wishing to be included should contact Ethan Young, AIVF Membership Services, (212) 473-3400.

and working-class women. In Chile, where the governing junta of General Augusto Pinochet has suppressed all forms of mass communication, video portapaks have enabled underground producers to bring officially banned information to the people. For example, a group of freelance videomakers called Teleanalisis produces outlawed news clips about mass demonstrations against military repression. In Brazil, which has a long history of cinema production, the satirical tapes by the independent production group Olhar Electronico, are funny and sophisticated, sometimes employing experimental techniques.

In-kind donations of time and materials, as well as Ranucci's own editing system, made it possible to dub inexpensive distribution copies. Translators from the Latino community in the U.S. donated their time, and the Downtown Community TV Center provided thousands of dollars worth of postproduction equipment to subtitle the tapes. *Democracy in Communication* is offered as a flexible package—exhibitors can show all or part of it. Ranucci helps groups put together thematic programs: on Latin American women or underground video from Chile, for example. Rentals are offered on a sliding scale to make it possible for community groups to use it. In fact, Ranucci encourages renters to keep the tapes and repeat showings.

The venues that have exhibited *Democracy in Communication* are almost as diverse as the producers represented. The American Film Institute screened it as a special exhibition at the National Video Festival, a partial program was shown at the Flaherty Seminar, and others have been sponsored by the Third World Film Festival in Atlanta; Cine Festival, the showcase for Latin American films organized by the Guadelupe Cultural and Arts Center in San Antonio, Texas; the Port Washington Library on Long Island; the Institute for Contemporary Arts in Boston; and the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador-Philadelphia. Ranucci sees the package as a first step in building a distribution network for Latin American programs, and has been cooperating with distribution groups like the El Salvador Media Project, Paper Tiger TV, and X-Change TV.

RT

MASTER WHAT POSSIBILITIES?

The newest distribution outlet to appear on the horizon is the video vending machine. It may be only a matter of months before recorded cassettes, automatically dispensed at the flick of a credit card, will be as easy to score as a candy bar. Most machines currently in operation hold 300 to 400 tapes, comprising 80 to 90 titles—mostly feature films. They are found in shopping malls, Seven-Elevens, and other public places where vending machines are common. Late returns on rentals are automatically charged to the customer's card.

Group 1 Entertainment of Los Angeles is currently test-marketing its Movie Machine at 450 sites in southern California, with an eye toward "going nationwide, then worldwide," according to West Coast marketing manager Bill Durfee. Sites include groceries, hospitals, hotels, gas stations, high-rise office buildings, and corporate complexes.

The types of films selected reflect standard industry demographics: adventure titles in the Midwest, musicals and drama for the West Coast, and so on. Any future for independent works in this market? "We would be open to whatever tape would sell," said Durfee, adding that his company "plans on using top 40 for the most part."

ETHAN YOUNG

JANE MORRISON: 1947-1987

Jane Morrison, filmmaker and past president of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmaker's board of directors, died after a

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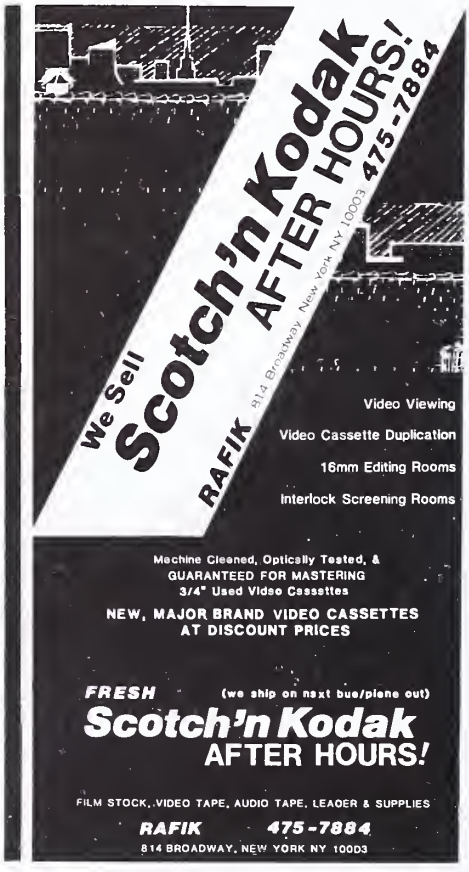
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sudden attack of malaria in Nairobi, Kenya, on January 21. She was 39. The New York-based producer was in Nairobi attending a film festival at the invitation of the Kenyan government, with the intention of traveling on to Zimbabwe to teach a series of film workshops.

Her work included both documentaries and dramatic productions, most dealing with the culture of Maine, her home state. A sense of "otherness" resulting from the clash of cultures she encountered in moving from small town to inner city was also expressed in her best-known film, *The Two Worlds of Angelita*, which depicts the migration of a family from Puerto Rico to New York City. The 1984 dramatic feature won the Prix d'Honneur at the Biarritz Festival in Paris.

Speaking on the making of a film whose subject "crosses over" to another culture, Morrison once noted, "I passed my 'ugly American test' among Puerto Ricans, but the American funders never could figure out what made me think *I* could understand Puerto Ricans if they could not. Many of my friends and associates confided that they wished I wouldn't do a film about *Puerto Ricans*. Of course, this only made me work harder." She stressed the need to "avoid stereotypes, represent reality, and present the point of view from the inside."

Morrison was once described by champion Muhammad Ali, who met her at the Latin American Cinema festival in Havana, as "a net where hearts are caught like fish."

A memorial fund has been established in Jane Morrison's honor. For more information, contact Women Make Movies, 225 Lafayette Street, #212, New York, NY 10012.

EY

AL ROBBINS: 1938-1987

Al Robbins, whose life and work were marked by fierce intensity, died suddenly in California on February 8. Born in Chicago in 1938, Robbins studied design and architecture with Buckminster Fuller and, later, philosophy. He began working in film in the 1960s, finishing *Gut Poem* in 1969. He turned to video in 1974. In New York, where he lived, his *Anticatastrophe Tapes* were shown at Anthology Film Archives, and appeared in installation form at P.S. 1 and the Whitney Museum of American Art. His work also shown at the Akedemie der Kunste in Dusseldorf and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. A poet as well as a video artist, Robbins published a collection of his writings, *Don't Let These Words Set*, in 1980.

Robbins' personal energy was evident in the raw and elemental tapes he created. He was profoundly concerned with the "physicalness"—and metaphysics—of video. His extraordinary vision and articulation stretched the



The cast of *Los Dos Mundos de Angelita* (*The Two Worlds of Angelita*), the 1984 feature by Jane Morrison.

Courtesy Women Make Movies

possibilities of video, and his own power and strength were a challenge to artists and friends alike. His manner of living and of working bespoke his keen sensitivity to the world, the inseparability of his thought processes from that world. He leaves us grateful for and in awe of this sensitivity and his special ability to reach deep into the center of each nerve.

ANNE BRATACH

SEQUELS

New York's Film Forum has taken over the programming of its second screen, **Film Forum 2**, for the first time since the opening of the twin cinema in September 1981. Previously the theater was licensed to commercial companies that have shown repertory, first-run, and move-over titles, while Film Forum 1 has specialized in presenting New York theatrical premieres of U.S. independent and foreign art features. Bruce Goldstein, an independent programmer and publicist, has been hired as the new Film Forum program coordinator.

Ron Hull, director of the Program Fund at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, issued a disappointing response to several requests by the **Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers** made at the Program Fund/Coalition's December meeting ["Raising the Ante," March 1986]. In his five page letter of January 30, Hull refused the Coalition's request for a $500,000 increase in program funding through Open Solicitations and a special Program Fund request for new independent series ideas. He did send a letter to WGBH, as requested by the Coalition, affirming CPB's requirement that a "significant" number of programs within the new *American Experience* series be made by independent producers but declined to stress that they should be producers not previously associated with the station. He also refused to instruct WGBH to establish an advisory committee of independent producers for the series. Hull also turned down the Coalition's request that step-up funds—money required to cover the costs of preparing programs for national broadcast—be restored to the level of $250,000 in 1987 and increased to $500,000 in 1988. Instead, only $138,936 has been allocated for 1987, according to Hull's letter. He also wrote that it remains unclear how much will be available in 1988, citing "lack of discretionary dollars available." Finally, Hull refused to issue a policy statement to PBS requiring that step-up funds be substantially allocated to independents. He did, however, agree to share PBS reports identifying recipients of those funds with the Coalition.

The Learning Channel will get another boost from the **John D. And Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation** ["Sequels," January/ February 1987] in the form of a $1.7-million grant to TLC's parent company, the nonprofit Appalachian Community Service Network. The money will underwrite production and promotion of 52 hours of independent film and video programming.

Richard Brookhiser, senior editor of the *National Review* and member of the board of directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, has declined renomination to the board. Brookhiser, whose term ends March 26, has been the major advocate for the proposed **content analysis of public affairs programming on PBS** [see "Board in Flames: Conservatives Take Control at CPB," January/February 1987]. With his exit and intensified scrutiny of CPB by Democrat-controlled congressional committees, the content analysis proposal may become history.

President Reagan has announced the nomination of Sheila Burke Tate, former press secretary to Nancy Reagan and senior vice president at the Washington PR firm Burson-Marsteller, to the CPB board.

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Stormé DeLarverie, the former mistress/ master of ceremonies at the Jewel Box Revue, and the subject of Michelle Parkerson's new documentary.

Courtesy filmmaker

Michelle Parkerson

Editor's note: Michelle Parkerson and Yvonne Rainer's articles in this issue continue a series of papers and transcribed talks delivered at ViewPoints: A Conference on Women, Culture, and Public Media *held at Hunter College in New York City on November 8 and 9, 1986 [see January/February 1987]. This national conference was independently organized by a committee of women involved in film, video, and photography (including* The Independent *editor Martha Gever and associate editor Renee Tajima), cosponsored by Women Make Movies and Hunter College Women's Studies Department, and funded by the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York Council on the Humanities.*

Image-making is power. Film and video, the most powerful and expensive visual arts, are sophisticated tools of political persuasion and history-writing. Traditionally used to mutilate and stereotype, mass media has been killing women and people of color softly for some time. But the independent film and video community, particularly Black independent and feminist filmmakers, create with an understanding that film and video no longer serve as mere entertainment in these dangerous times. We use film and video to validate our herstory and experiences, where before there was only distortion. Where before there was no documentation of our lives and work, we are using media to answer the void.

For many independent film and videomakers, the choice in our work stands between social commitment—social cause—or creativity, often between cause or funding. Though the decision to produce alternatively—outside the mainstream of Hollywood and the networks—is essentially a political choice, independents sometimes find themselves favoring "creativity" over cause. Producers focus on technology devoid of consciousness to attain "universality" or saleability or, conversely, exploit political issues with the didatic use of media as agitprop.

I am interested in using film and video as vehicles for social change: an alternative vision, a voice for the silenced or forgotten. I am also committed to demystifying the filmmaking process. My work focuses on the depth and diversity of African American women in nontraditional roles, with a specific eye on the empowerment embodied in the lives and contributions of unsung Black women artists.

Cause is a personal foundation rooted in concerns and issues that motivate me to struggle for change. Politics is not simply ideology or affiliation or slogan; it is daily life. It is how I meet and experience the world— Black, female, and lesbian. It is where I spend my money, who I sleep with, what I eat, where I live, how I interact with each of you. It is the films and videos I commit myself to making. In this regard, cause is the *source* of my creativity. Commercially speaking, the personal vision of independent film and videomakers—highlighting the extraordinary lives of ordinary people—is our most marketable asset. It offers imagery alternatives to the status quo of mainstream media, and audiences want the choice.

The power of images lies in their ability to influence and persuade audiences because, for a few fleeting moments, people suspend their belief in the "real world" and become absorbed in whatever comes on the screen. The way issues or people are presented via lighting, camera angle, dialogue, etc., as well as *what* people or issues are presented, convey value judgments and social attitudes.

The power of image-*making* lies in the editorial process. The way images are presented and *what* images are selected convey a political slant. Historically, women and people of color have merely been images on the screen or spectators. Rarely have we been the image-makers. Black independent films surfaced in the silent era with "race movies" geared to segregated, all-Negro audiences. Early Black directors and producers (among them, Oscar Micheaux and the Johnson Brothers) were, almost without exception, male. The history of African American women as producers, directors, cinematographers, and editors is, on the other hand, a recent history, beginning with Madeline Anderson's works in the mid-sixties. White women, by virtue of racial privilege, also have a legacy of filmmaking dating back to Lois Weber and Alice Guy Blaché in the silent era and, later, Dorothy Arzner, all



Crewwomen Audrey Barnes (left, foreground) and Orinne J.T. Takagi (right) confer with Parkerson (center) during the making of *Stormé*.

Photo: Sharon Farmer

leading directors working in Hollywood studios.

As a producer, I am keenly aware that show business is business. The average cost of most "broadcast quality" independent media production is $2,000 per minute and rising, while public support for the arts and social services has greatly diminished under the Reagan regime. Creative funding strategies—including foreign coproduction deals, limited partnerships, working with and for independents, corporate underwriting, public television funding, private support—are being utilized in various combinations to produce independent work based on political issues.

As a producer, certain choices shape concepts and present messages. You must decide on the selection of images and information. You must decide how to order those things for the optimum visual and emotional effect. Those editorial choices involve the image itself: whether film or video is used, aesthetic considerations (high production design or cinema verité, black and white or color), genre (documentary, animation, dramatic feature, or format combinations), and the selection process (what scenes are used or deleted, how to effectively link or order scenes into a total perspective). Images convey information and attitudes. As important, so does sound or the lack of it. Images and sound set up situations, juxtapose and parallel information. But most powerfully, film and video can illuminate history.

Of my own work, *Stormé: The Lady of the Jewel Box* is a documentary on Stormé De Larverie, male impersonator and former M.C. of the legendary Jewel Box Revue, one of America's first integrated female impersonation shows. During the fifties and sixties, the Revue did an unprecedented tour of the Black theater circuit in a social climate where segregation and McCarthyism held sway. A forerunner of *La Cage aux Folles*, the Jewel Box Revue's flamboyant rise to international popularity spanned 40-years (1939-1973). *Stormé...* chronicles the grandeur of the Jewel Box Revue through the remarkable life story of its host. It profiles a woman, an era, and integral slice of Black lesbian and gay history.

My documentary feature *Gotta Make This Journey* is a video profile of Sweet Honey in the Rock, who describe themselves as a radical Black women's acappella ensemble. All six of its members live and work in Washington, D.C. Now embarking on their thirteenth year, Sweet Honey serves the cause of international social activism through their music, while this music remains rooted in Black traditional and civil rights song. *Journey* revolves around Sweet Honey's ninth anniversary concert and highlights the history and diversity of the group. Their individual lives and concerns and their outreach to the deaf community are featured as well. The program's intent was not only to document the crosscultural impact of Sweet Honey's work, but to also present a larger statement about how Black women are empowering themselves. Additionally, *Journey* gives an alternative perspective of music as a weapon for social change.

I am one of a growing number of Black independent filmmakers who are expanding into video. I am one of roughly 20 Black women across the country who work independently in film and video. I came to video and filmmaking from the theater, and my fervor for these media was fueled by my mother, an avid movie fan and theater-goer. It was her passion for the arts of filmmaking and acting that first introduced me to names like Vincent Minelli and Frank Capra, Edith Head and Adrian, and movie stars like Joan Crawford, Loretta Young, and Dorothy Dandridge, Hollywood's first Black film goddess. After becoming active in Washington community theater during high school, I majored in film production at Temple University. My decision to switch from theater to film study was deeply influenced by the urgency of the Black Nationalist and women's movements of the early seventies. The impetus to control one's body, history, and destiny filtered through these concurrent liberation struggles and left an indelible mark on me. Black Nationalism and feminism kindled my political awareness and ultimately catalyzed my search for a synthesis between politics, my daily life, and work.

In a sense, my work can be categorized as "docutainment," i.e., reworking history through the documentary genre in combination with performance segments. The subjects of my documentaries are Black women artists. Somewhat like crossover music, the entertainment elements in these productions allow generic acceptance of the artists through their music while subliminally allowing an acceptance of the artists' politics.

I pursue the risks and challenges that film and video present politically and artistically. As a Black lesbian and filmmaker, I have a passion for redefining the capacity to communicate thorugh media. I have a passion for creativity utilizing technology as a tool for activism, visibility, and rewriting herstory—because, at best, the beauty and power of film and videomaking meshes both cause and creativity. And there is still work to be done above and beyond rectifying the damage left by the white, male culture. Tackling homophobia and sexism in the Black independent film community as well as racism and class oppression within the feminist film community are challenges still facing us at the end of the decade.

Michelle Parkerson is a writer and independent producer based in Washington, D.C. Stormé *is her current film-in-progress.*

© Michelle Parkerson 1986



For 13 years, Sweet Honey and the Rock have used music as a weapon for social change, from Parkerson's *Gotta Make This Journey*.

Courtesy videomaker

THOUGHTS ON WOMEN'S CINEMA:
Eating Words, Voicing Struggles

Yvonne Rainer

Polemics and manifestos having always served as sparkplugs to my energies and imagination, I've been surprised when, following their publication, such statements were taken with what seemed to be excessive seriousness. Thus, in the mid-sixties, when I said "no" to this and "no" to that in dance and theater, I could not forsee that these words would dog my footsteps and beg me to eat them (or at least modify them) for the next 20 years. Such may be the case with my more recent stance toward/against/for narrative conventions in cinema. Raised, as I have been, with this century's western notions of adversarial aesthetics, I continue to have difficulty in accommodating my latest articulation of the narrative "problem"—i.e., according to Theresa De Lauretis' conflation of narrativity itself with the Oedipus complex, whereby woman's position is constantly reinstated for the consummation or frustration of male desire. The difficulty lies in accommodating this with a conviction that it is of the utmost urgency that women's voices, experience, and consciousness—at whatever stage—be expressed in all their multiplicity and heterogeneity, and in as many formats and styles—narrative or not—from queendom come and throughout the kingdom. In relation to the various notions of an avant garde, this latter view, in its emphasis on voicing what has previously gone unheard, gives priority to unmasking and reassessing social relations rather than overturning previously validated aesthetic positions. My personal accommodation becomes more feasible when cast in terms of difference rather than opposition and when the question is asked, "Which strategies bring women together in recognition of their common and different economic and sexual oppression, and which strategies do not?" The creation of oppositional categories of women's film or video, or, for starters, film *and* video, begs this question.

For what it's worth, here is a list of useless oppositions. Documentary vs. fiction. Work in which the voices carry a unified truth vs. work in which truth must be wrested from conflicting or conflicted voices. Work that adheres to traditional codes vs. work in which the story is disrupted by stylistic incongruities or digressions (Helke Sanders' *Redupers*, Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen's *Riddles of the Sphinx*). Work with a beginning, middle, and end vs. work that has a beginning and then turns into something else (Marguerite Duras' *Nathalie Granger*). Work in which the characters run away with the movie vs. work whose characters never get off the ground (Rabina Rose's *Nightshift*). Work in which women *tell* their herstories (Julia Reichert and Jim Klein's *Union Maids*) vs. work in which they parody them (Ana Carolina's *Hearts and Guts*). Work that delivers information in a straightforward manner (Jackie Ochs' *Secret Agent*) vs. work in which information accrues slowly, elliptically, or poetically (Trinh Minh-ha's *Naked Spaces*). Work in which the heroine acts vs. work in which she does nothing but talk (my *Journeys from Berlin/1971*). Work in which she triumphs vs. work in which she fails (Valie Export's *Invisible Adversaries*). Work in which she is a searcher or dominatrix (Bette Gordon's *Variety*, Monika Treut and Elfi Mikesch's *Seduction: The Cruel Woman*) vs. work in which she is a victim (Lynne Tillman and Sheila McLaughlin's *Committed*). Work whose heroines you like (Connie Field's *Rosie the Riveter*, Julie Dash's *Illusions*) vs. work whose heroines repel you (Doris Dorrie's *Straight to the Heart*, Chantal Akerman's *je, tu, il, elle*). Work in which you nearly drown in exotic signifiers of femininity (Leslie Thornton's *Adynata*) vs. work whose director can't figure out how to dress the her-





Left: From *Rosie the Riveter*, by Connie Field.
Photo: Gordon Parks

Right: From *Straight to the Heart*, by Dorris Dorrie.
Courtesy New Line Cinema

oine, so removes her altogether (my *The Man Who Envied Women*). *All* these films share a potential for political purpose and historical truth.

I could go on *ad infinitum* with these divide-and-conquer oppositions. There is one other example I'm not going to give equal footing with the others but will mention in passing only in so far as it bears a deceptive resemblance to the others: Films in which the heroine marries the man vs. films in which she murders him. We have only to look in vain for recent films by women that end in marriage to realize what a long way we've come, give or take the baby. Marriage at the beginning maybe, but at the end, never. I challenge anyone to name one in recent memory. Murder, on the other hand, is a different story. As Joan Braderman pointed out last spring at the Gender and Visual Representation Conference at the University of Massachusetts, in the past 10 years a substantial number of women's films have been produced that focus on a murder of a man by a woman or women. To name a few: Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman*, Marlene Gorris' *A Question of Silence*, Dorrie's *Straight to the Heart*, Sally Heckel's *A Jury of Her Peers*, Margaretha Von Trotta's *Sheer Madness*.

The phenomenon of man-murder in women's films points to the problematic of representing men. Do we wreak revenge on them (if for no other reason than the cinematic sway they have held over us for so long), turn the tables on them, turn them into celluloid wimps, give them ample screen time in which to speak self-evident macho bullshit, do away with them by murder within the story, or eliminate them *from* the story to begin with? Do we focus on exceptional men who escape the above stereotypes, or do we weave utopian scenarios in which men and women gambol in egalitarian bliss? Lynne Tillman and I pondered the question of whether it is politically useful to allow ourselves to be fascinated with men in our films even as we discussed the strange fascination with the 1986 World Series that had befallen the two of us along with every woman we know.

Following one screening of *The Man Who Envied Women*, a well-known feminist who subscribes to Lacanian psychoanalytic theory asked me why I hadn't made a film about a woman. I was flabbergasted, having been under the impression that I had done just that. But she, taking the title literally and taken in by the prevailing physical presence of the male character, had discounted the pursuing, nagging, questioning female voice on the soundtrack. By staying out of sight my heroine is never caught with her pants down. Does this mean the film is not *about* her?

It's also been noted that my female characters are not heroines. I would qualify that: My heroines are not heroic. They are deeply skeptical of easy solutions and very self-critical, constantly looking for their own complicity in patriarchal configurations. But neither are they cynical or pessimistic. The moments I like best in my films are those that produce—almost simultaneously— both assertion and question. Early on in *TMWEW* the assertion that women can't be committed feminists unless they give up men is uttered as part of a conversation, overheard by a man in the foreground, by a woman who is testing her female companion by quoting yet another woman whose relationship to the speaker is not identified and who never appears. The two speakers are also anonymous and are never seen again once this scene is over. I, the director, am not trying in this scene to persuade my audience of the rightness or wrongness of the statement. What is important is that it be given utterance, because in our culture, outside of a convent, giving up men freely and willingly—that is, without the social coercion of aging—is a highly stigmatized act or downright taboo. The linkage of giving up men, in this scene, with commitment as a feminist, however, is distanced and made arguable through the device of having the spectator become an eavesdropper on the conversation along with the foregrounded male character, then distanced once more through quotation. "*She told me*," says this minor, will-o-the-wisp heroine, "that I would never be a committed feminist until I give up men."

Whether an utterance comes across as feminist prescription, call-to-arms, or problem-articulated-ambiguously-to-be-dealt-with-or-not-later-in-the-film is always on my mind in the collecting, mounting, and framing of texts. If the experience of watching certain kinds of social documentaries is like watching the bouncing ball come down at exactly the right moment on the syllables of the familiar song, watching a film of mine may be more akin to "now you see it, now you don't." You never know when you're going to be hit on the head with the ball, and you aren't always sure what to do when the ball disappears for long stretches of time.

Which brings me to what might be called a method of interrogating my characters and myself when I set out to make a film. Thinking about this has been facilitated by rereading Bill Nichols' essay, "The Voice of Docu-





Top: From *The Man Who Envied Women*, by Yvonne Rainer.

Courtesy filmmaker

Bottom: From *Adyanta*, by Leslie Thornton.

Courtesy Women Make Movies

mentary," which poses certain questions that are relevant to both fiction and documentary. To what degree are we to believe a given speaker in a film? Do all the speakers convey a unified vision of a given history? Do the speakers emerge as autonomous shapers of a personal destiny or as subjects conditioned by the contradictions and pressures of a particular historical period? To what degree does a given film convey an independent consciousness, a voice of its own, probing, remembering, sustaining, doubting, functioning as a surrogate for our own consciousness? Do the questioning and believing of such a film question its own operations? Does the activity of fixing meaning in such a film refer to relations outside the film—"out there"—or does the film remain stalled in its own reflexivity? Is reflexivity the only alternative to films that simply suppose that things were as the participant-witnesses recall or state them, or as they appear to the spectator, in the case of fiction films?

Finally: Should a film whose main project is to restore the voice and subjectivity of a previously ignored or suppressed person or segment of the population, should such a film contain argument, contradiction, or express the director's ambivalence within the film either directly, through language, or indirectly, through stylistic intervention? Obviously, we can't afford to be prescriptive about any of this.

My own solution runs to keeping an extradiegetic voice, a voice separate from the characters and story, fairly active in every scene. It need not take the form of a narrating voice, although it often does. Sometimes it takes the form of a *Til Eulenspiegel*-like disruption, as when an anonymous woman enters the frame just before a troubling bit of sexual theory is ennunciated, peers into the camera lens, and asks all the menstruating women to leave the theater. Sometimes it operates like a kind of seizure, producing odd behavior in a given character, as when the analysand in *Journeys from Berlin* speaks in baby-talk. Often it comes across in reading or recitation, which has the effect of separating the voice of the character from that of the author of his or her words.

At this historical moment we still need to search out and be reminded of suppressed histories and struggles: prosititutes, housewives, women of color, lesbians, third world people, the aging, working women. The method of representing these histories is a separate and equally important issue. I see no reason why a single film can't use many different methods, which is something I've been saying for years but didn't come close to realizing until *TMWEW*. In this film fictional and documentary modes come into play more fully than in any of my previous work, offsetting the calculation of my still-cherished recitations and readings with the immediacy of dramatic and documentary enactment. These last are, admittedly, the strategies that offer the spectator the most powerful sense of the real. But reality, as we so well know, always lies elsewhere, a fact that we nevertheless endlessly seek to disavow and from which we always retreat. I shall continue to remind us of that disavowal by challenging reality's representational proxies with assorted hanky-panky. I hope others continue to do likewise and otherwise.

Yvonne Rainer is a filmmaker and ex-choreographer.

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Letter on South Africa

Mfundi Vundla

Editor's note: In the December 1986 issue of The Independent, *we published a letter from a group of South African media professionals disputing many of the arguments made by Charlayne Haynes in her article "For a Cultural Boycott of South Africa" [January/February 1986]. They questioned the effectiveness of a general cultural boycott strategy, asking instead that independent media producers in the U.S. participate in a selective boycott against distribution of the products of the commercial entertainment industry and build alliances with cultural activists working within South Africa by allowing their productions to be shown in noncommercial contexts. Haynes, on the other hand, maintained that noncommercial cultural events like the Durban Film Festival, a venue for independent films, serves the purposes of official South African propaganda, giving a liberal face to apartheid. We asked Mfundi Vundla, a South African writer and artist living in New York City to respond, and he sent the following letter.*

I think the controversy generated by Charlayne Haynes' article, "For a Cultural Boycott of South Africa," is instructive on the whole issue of the cultural blockade of South Africa. As a Black South African scriptwriter, I support the boycott. I have recently written a script for Lorimar for a CBS movie on the situation in South Africa. I was enocuraged by Lorimar's announcement last year that they were no longer going to renew contracts for their products in South Africa.

I mention Lorimar because I am persuaded by the argument of the South African media professionals that anti-Apartheid activists must target the studios, because they provide the bulk of the film product sent to South Africa. If it is our intention to hurt the whites who support the Boer fascist government, then let's deprive them of the films they watch. South Africa started making cosmetic changes in their sports policies after the International Olympic committee and other international sports organizations deprived them of access to the world international sports events. We need the media equivalent to this. If Paul Newman, Barbara Streisand, Tom Cruise, Robert Redford, Martin Scorcese, Meryl Streep, and Robert De Niro were to stand up tomorrow and tell the studios that they do not want to have their films shown in South Africa, that would be a great boost. It would deprive the white people and their white government of a major staple of their cultural diet.

I am not impressed, however, by the other arguments made by the South African group. I suspect that they are over estimating the importance of the Durban Festival. I noticed only two African names among the people who signed the letter protesting Haynes' article. I also suspect that the Durban Festival is predominantly attracting white film buffs. The South African filmmakers feel inconvenienced. That's it. That festival is of no major import, at least in so far as it making an impact in South Africa. It is for this reason that the Boer government allows it to exist in the first place. The truth is, the South African government may point to it as evidence of its "liberal" orientation, although I do not know whether it has done this. If anything, the pseudo-marxism that permeates their response indicates their peripheral position in relation to the national liberation movement in South Africa.

Independent filmmakers in this country should make common cause with the Free South Africa Movement and put pressure on the studios to divest their business operations in South Africa. People in South Africa do not care that Lizzie Borden, St. Clair Bourne, Sam Sills, Jim Jarmusch, or Spike Lee are boycotting South Africa (let me note, I fully respect independent filmmakers supporting the cultural blockade). But they do care and they will sit up once the studios decide en masse to pull out of that country.

Avant-Garde Film

T. ZUMMER

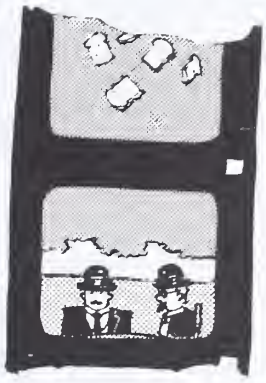
1. The Early Years



"Un Chandelier"
S. Dali/L. Buñuel



"Valet Mécanique"
Fernand Leger



"Toast Before Breakfast"
Hans Richter



"...Impotemkin..."
S. Eisenstein



"The Man With a Pick-up Truck"
Dziga Vertov



"Intractable"
René clair



"Messes in the Afternoon"
Maya Deren



"Large Door"
Luis Buñuel

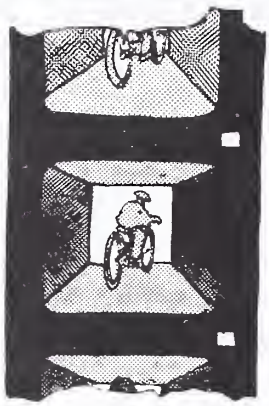


Anorexic Cinema
Marcel Duchamp

2. Masterworks of the American Avant-Garde:



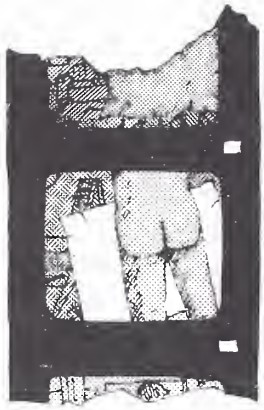
"Flaming Preachers"
- Jack Smith



"Serene Velocipede"
-Ernie Gehr



"Dog-Star-Pork-chop"
-Stan Brakhage



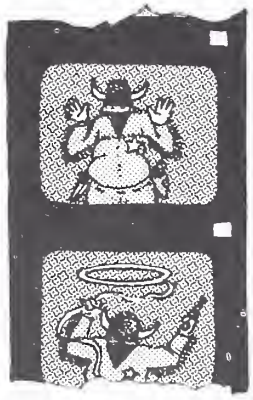
"Naugahyde"
- Andy Warhol



"S:S:O:M:E:T:H:I:N:G,
S:S:O:M:E:T:H:I:N:G,
S:S:O:M:E:T:H:I:N:G."
- Paul Sharits



"Fassion"
- Jean-Luc Godard



"Taurus Rising"
- Kenneth Anger



"La Region Dentale"
- Michael Snow



"Boring Lemons"
- Hollis Frampton

3. Post-Avant-Garde



"Je, Tu, Oh-Oh"
- Chantal Ackerman



"Journeys from Bloomingdale's"
- Yvonne Rainer



"Deux Foux"
- Jackie Raynal



"Aydonwanta"
- Leslie Thornton



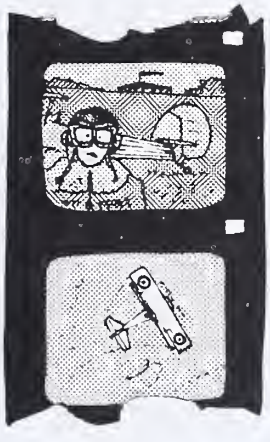
"Gently Down the Drain"
- Su Friedrich



"Naked Places, Hanging Around"
- Trinh T. Minh-ha



"Daughters of K-Mart"
- Marjorie Keller



"Aimless"
Peter Wollen / Laura Mulvey



"Bored with Fame"
- Lizzie Borden

T. Zummer

THIRD CINEMA AT EDINBURGH: REFLECTIONS ON A PIONEERING EVENT



Sankofa's feature film, *The Passion of Remembrance*, investigates differences within the Black community in Britain, using a variety of styles and devices reflecting the complexity of its subject.

Courtesy filmmakers

Kobena Mercer

Ed.'s note: In place of a general report on the 1986 Edinburgh International Film Festival, which was planned for this issue but never arrived, we are reprinting Kobena Mercer's account of the Third Cinema: Theories and Practices conference, held during the festival on August 11-13, 1986 and sponsored by the British Film Institute. Mercer's article appeared in the November/December 1986 issue of Screen *(Vol. 27, No. 6), and we are grateful to the author, editor, and publisher for permission to reprint it here. We have included information in Mercer's original footnotes in the text and altered some spelling and punctuation to conform to* The Independent*'s style.*

It would be best to describe the conference on Third Cinema at this year's Edinburgh Film Festival as a surface of emergence. Structured around this flexible and open-ended term for independent film practices in the geo-political spaces of the Third World and its metropolitan diaspora(s), the event brought together filmmakers, scholars, cultural activists, and critics from Africa, India, Sri Lanka, the United States, and Britain. The three days of intense debate, and screenings of new and rarely seen films, provided an international frame of reference for a range of emerging differences in approach to cinema as a site of cultural struggle.

The term "Third Cinema" was first coined by the Argentinian filmmakers Octavio Getino and Fernando Solanas. With Glauber Rocha's call for a "New Cinema" and Julio Garcia Espinosa's manifesto for an "Imperfect Cinema," it marked the debate on the aesthetics and politics of film in struggles for cultural liberation that characterized the radical Latin American film culture of the 1960s. The term differentiated an ideologically combative film practice from both the commodity products of dominant film industries and the cinematic values of "auteurism." It has since been theoretically developed, and its reference expanded, by Ethiopian scholar Teshome Gabriel as a more general framework for the study not just of films made in the Third World, but of oppositional film practices that articulate cultural struggles [*Third Cinema in the Third World: The Aesthetics of Liberation*, Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1982]. In this sense the concept of a "Third Cinema" cuts across the boundaries of national cinemas and, as Jim Pines and Paul Willemen emphasized in their opening remarks at the conference, its very flexibility seems appropriate for the designation of a variety of *emerging* trends in radical film theory and practice. Because it does not function as a rigid classificatory term and seeks to avoid setting up yet another hegemonic norm for "correct" filmmaking, the idea seems particularly relevant to the emergent black independent film sector in Britain [and the United States]. It would be useful to place the event in this local historical context so as to draw out some of the issues debated.

Within the terms of this specific conjuncture, Third Cinema continued a conversation on the politics of race, nation, and ethnicity in the cultural institution of cinema which began with the Black Film Festival, organized by Jim Pines, at the Commonwealth Institute and the National Film Theatre [in London] in 1982. That event enabled a young generation of black film workshops, such as Black Audio Film Collective, Ceddo, and Sankofa, to make links with their Afro-American counterparts. Its success also demonstrated an incredible hunger for images among black audiences in Britain. In the wake of the political events of 1981 and the advent of Channel Four, it pinpointed a keen interest for black interventions in film and television, a new threshold of cultural struggle around the image [see special "Media Focus" issue of *Artrage*, No. 3/4, 1983]. The subsequent Third Eye symposium organised by June Givanni and Parminder Vir and the Greater London Council in 1983 consolidated links between filmmakers on a global scale by prioritizing issues of production, finance, distribution, and exhibition. By highlighting the common concern

with the relative underdevelopment of an economic infrastructure for independent black and Third World film, Third Eye drew attention to the parallels between center and periphery in terms of a struggle for access to the technology of cinema. At another level, it also reflected the impact of black and Third World feminisms, as issues of women's intervention on either side of the camera were brought into the foreground of debate [documented in *Third Eye: Struggle for Black and Third World Cinema*, Greater London Council, Race Equality Unit, 1986]. In the context of the radical policies on cultural production pursued by the GLC administration, their Anti Racist Film Programme of 1984 broke new ground in terms of exhibition strategies. Given that many mainstream distributors refuse to take on Third World films, regarding them as of "minority interest" and therefore "marginal," the GLC's local initiative helped build up wider audiences by setting up, on a small scale, alternative networks of exhibition among schools, colleges, community centers, and arts groups. Equally, if not more importantly, each of these events has nurtured the development of black independents by simply showing films from the Third World and the United States which otherwise would have been unseen and unknown.

The series of screenings and discussions organized under the theme of Cultural Identities earlier [in 1986] at the Commonwealth Institute shifted the terrain of debate to focus on issues of aesthetics, readings, and theoretically informed critique. The event was interesting in terms of bringing First World filmmakers and critics into a much closer dialogue with the questions raised by black and Third World film texts. In any event, it rendered visible the volume of issues that arise from film practices (such as those of the black independents in Britain) that are shaped and informed by a critical engagement *both* with Third World traditions of cultural struggle *and* the theoretical discourses that have characterized Euro-American debates on film. The Edinburgh Third Cinema conference demonstrated that such conditions of existence, producing new forms of work at the interface of different traditions, are by no means unique to the situation here in Britain. They pertain to the work of a number of hitherto isolated filmmakers, activists, and critics operating in a diversity of geographical, institutional, and professional locations. The ambiguities of the concept of a Third Cinema provided enough common ground to highlight many areas of overlapping concerns and preoccupations. The convergences suggest a renewal of passion for debate on the politics of film and cinema, something worth taking note of in the face of the apparent exhaustion, in Britain, of much of the once-innovative film theory of the seventies. And the ambiguities cut both ways as the conference exposed a spread of unresolved tensions that surfaced both in the encounter between First and Third Worlds, and within the Third World itself.

Teshome Gabriel's project of describing and theorizing "those essential qualities Third World films possess rather than those they may seem to lack" [Gabriel, "Towards a Critical Theory of Third World Films," *Third World Affairs*, London, 1985] has been attacked by Latin American film specialist Julianne Burton as "essentialist." Burton has argued that an underlying "Third Worldism" imposes a fictive unity and homogeneity that ignores the diversity of conditions of production and reception of Third World film texts [Burton, "Marginal Cinemas and Mainstream Critical Theory," *Screen*, Vol. 26, No. 3/4, May-August 1985]. The terms of their dispute/debate turn on the question of the adequacy of Euro-American critical theory for the analysis of Third Cinema. While Gabriel has registered the issue of its latent Euro-ethnocentrism, Burton defends the role of the "nonnative" critic in terms of encouraging a wider interest in Third World texts in the First World. However, in the absence of the unfortunately unavailable Gabriel, her Edinburgh presentation failed to confront the problem of the quasi-imperial division of labor (the Third World produces films, the First World produces the criticism and theory to "make sense" of them). Nor was that duality resolved by Burton's description of her own position as "neither" able to identify with her native U.S. culture "nor" to regard herself as a member of another.

This "neither/nor"-ism is inherently problematic, as it displaces the possibility of a self-reflexive approach to the critique of Eurocentrism by invoking an image of the "free-floating" intellectual able to transcend boundaries (imaginary, symbolic, or real?) of ethnic/national difference at will. One way out of this all too familiar Third/First World dilemma, if it can be simplified in terms of the metaphor of "race," was put forward at the BFI's Summer School on Echoes of Empire last year. As Jim Pines argued, "the analysis of racism and racial representation has to take on board the 'fact of whiteness'.... There needs to be a radical shift away from concentrating on the 'victims,' i.e. the black (Third World) subject as racial/analytical problematic, and more attention directed at the dominant and highly problematic 'white' subject" ["Black Film Making," *The Media Education Journal*, No. 2, 1986]. As it stands, Burton's practical criticism does not theorize "whiteness" or "First Worldness" as conditions of its own enunciation, thus inadvertently confirming Gabriel's point that "the barrier to dialogue is...the terms of dialogue itself" ["Colonialism and 'Law and Order' Criticism," *Screen*, no. 3/4, 1986].

This should not however obscure the fact that there are issues which need clarification in Gabriel's work. Certainly the "speculative" (rather than empirical) quality of his theorization of a Third Cinema aesthetic must be seen as a constructive response to the marginalization of

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Trinh T. Minh-ha's *Naked Spaces (Living is Round)* comprises a critique of ethnographic filmmaking.

Courtesy Women Make Movies

Third World cinema (and African cinema in particular) as a worthwhile area of study. Yet at certain points his stark contrast between values encoded in filmic discourse (the valorization of landscape in long shot versus the "psychologism" of the close-up) seems formalist and in need of more detailed contextualization. While his paper on popular memory as a resource of cultural struggle (presented on video at Edinburgh) suggested that folkloric logic disrupts and critiques the hierarchies of Western dichotomies (subject/object, good/evil, etc.), his own methodology often reproduces conventional conceptual dualisms to think a general or "total" theory of a Third Cinema aesthetic as such. Gabriel takes his major reference points from the marxism of Fanon and Cabral, yet a set of more contemporary directions in the critique of imperialism, influenced by the ground-clearing work of Edward Said and Gayatri Spivak, surfaced at Edinburgh. The new points of departure in critical theory and textual practice in the work of Geeta Kapur, Homi Bhabha, Trinh T. Minh-ha, and Laleen Jayamanne share in common a desire to step outside the stasis of "opposition" and suggest a "deconstructive" approach to the critique of Eurocentrism which appropriates post-structuralist theories to interrogate their limitations, absences, and silences.

A key theme here is the question of "otherness" and its ambiguities. Jayamanne's film, *A Song of Ceylon*, rearticulates an interest in feminist debates on psychoanalysis, hysteria, and the body by exploring the "body in excess" as it moves between Asian and European idioms of expression. Her work suggests the impossibility of retrieving cultural difference in any pristine state. Similarly, Trinh Minh-ha's new film, *Naked Space* s (*Living Is Round*), opens onto the issues of "otherness" and of "authenticity" that structure the discourses of ethnographic filmmaking, questioning the idea that "'Correct' cultural film-making...implies that Africans show Africa, Asians, Asia and Euro-Americans...the

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Med Hondo constructs history as theater in his film *West Indies*.
Courtesy Mypheduh Films

World." However, while her innovative idea of an "Inappropriate Other" suggested a strategy for a nonauthoritative representation of difference, it also seemed to echo aspects of a transcendental "neither/nor"-ism. Homi Bhabha's presentation offered rich possibilities opened up by a rereading of Fanon's theories of cultural struggle in the light of Lacanian psychoanalysis. Bhabha's distinction between "cultural diversity," as a strategy of colonial or post-colonial governability, and "cultural differences," which split the imaginary unity of the subject to produce new forms of knowledge engendered by the frictions and uncertainties of difference itself, suggest new ways of thinking the terms of contemporary cultural struggles. In particular, his idea that the key index of a qualitative transformation in cultural struggle is marked by the intensification of the *indeterminacy* of signs and meanings seems highly relevant to the cultural politics of "ethnicity" in Britain [see Bhabha's introduction, "Remembering Fanon," in reprint of *Black Skin, White Masks*, London: Pluto Press, 1986].

In a different way Afro-American scholar Clyde Taylor also invited a critical rethink of the very foundations of film criticism. His paper problematized the category of "aesthetics," homing in on the inherent "race-ism" of Western discourses on "beauty" that debar the black subject, *de facto* and *de jure*, from access to its aesthetic ideals. His arguments drew substantively on the recent work of Sylvia Wynter which argues that the crisis of the post-Enlightenment episteme demands a "re-writing of knowledge," that is, a disarticulation of the orders of power and knowledge inscribed in Western modernity [see Wynter, "The Ceremony Must Be Found: After Humanism," *Boundary* 2, 1985, and her outline of cultural politics in *CLR James: His Life and Works*, London: Allison and Busby, 1986]. However, Taylor's radical "bracketting" of aesthetics was misconstrued as an argument for "cultural nationalism." Rather than stimulating the formulation of fresh criteria for the evaluation of cultural/art practices, his paper elicited anxieties and divisions among participants, notably between adherents of post-structuralist approaches and those who opposed them. To be able to explore such differences so as to *learn* from them it would be necessary to reinsert the issue of the uneven development that makes the Third World such a "messy" space of heterogeneity. We need to be able to discuss (non-divisively) the variousness of different national/cultural traditions, and especially with regard to film cultures, the marked differences between French, Spanish, and English-speaking zones. For one reason or another (the paucity of Latin American filmmakers and critics present, for instance) this was something that didn't happen at Edinburgh.

The expression of such differences should not really be that surprising given that the Third World (both territory and map) so often functions as a symbol of Chaos that will mirror the First World's image of itself as Order. However, the idea of a Third Cinema has another dimension in that it also includes the concept of a diaspora. For obvious historical reasons, this notion seems to have more of an appeal for Afro-American and Afro-Caribbean filmmakers as a way of exploring common differences. Here there are interesting overlaps around issues of audience and the critique of dominant forms of representation. Characterising Third Cinema as a battle zone between the "toy soldiers" of cultural colonialism—that is, the alienating spectacle of Hollywood—and embryonic alternatives that seek to break with its codes and conventions, Haile Gerima reinstated a passionate case for an "oppositional" cinema urgently needed to counteract the demoralizing effects of the dominant movie industry among black audiences from Lagos to Los Angeles. Gerima's position points towards a reengagement with the question of how dominant ideologies dominate. His concern with their effects on the black and Third World spectator raises a question about the adequacy of the Althusserian-inspired study of ideology that shaped debate in the seventies. Also addressing dominant media, Ayoka Chenzira argued that the rhetoric of "positive versus negative" images (which has played a large part in black critiques of media stereotypes in Britain too) is ultimately more disenabling than enabling for black filmmaking. Television programs like *The Cosby Show*, produced in response to the open market for "positive" images, have only led to a new system of stereotypes, glossing over much "unfinished business" behind the so-called "negative" image. The U.S. filmmaker's new documentary on child abuse, *Silent Sounds Screaming*, signals a determination to work through complex issues unthinkable within the static polarization of "positive and negative."

The critique of media stereotypes has informed the counter-practices of the black independents in Britain, but what is significant now is the plurality of aesthetic and political options that characterize their practices. On the one hand, members of the Asian workshop Re-Take argued for a realist aesthetic as a way of engaging the community as their target audience—a position embodied in *Sanctuary Challenge*, their new documentary film about struggles against deportation in the context of British immigration law. However, it was argued that the "community" does not exist as a homogeneous body politic, but harbours many, often antagonistic, positions and opinions: as such there is no one "reality" that awaits representation but a number of competing "versions" that struggle for predominance. Taking such a position, Sankofa, for example, seek to employ experimental strategies as a way of intervening in collective debates. Their earlier film *Territories* anchors itself within the "documentary" format only to ambush the assumption of any one authoritative voice or "look," thus opening up a number of points of view on an event as complex as Notting Hill Carnival. And from another context, Med Hondo's epic *West Indies* (made in 1979 but hitherto unscreened here) also states the case for an experimental approach to the film apparatus. Staging the stories of domination and resistance, exploitation and migration that have shaped the Caribbean on a reconstructed slave ship in a deserted warehouse, it deploys this "Brechtian" device to draw in other theatrical elements from the genre of the musical and disrupt the idea of history as narrative continuity. Its carnivalesque quality sets up a dialogic discourse that questions our "knowledge" of past and present and invites the spectator into an active reading of the text.

In the specific context of the black independents in Britain, the range of choices—documentary, narrative, experimental—available to-



In his epic tale *West Indies*, Med Hondo stages the history of Caribbean colonial domination, set on a reconstructed slave ship docked in a deserted warehouse.

Courtesy Mypheduh Films

day must be situated historically. It marks a shift from the almost exclusive commitment to realism (as a mode of counter-representation against the effects of the dominant media) that characterized the practices of an earlier generation of independent practitioners such as Horace Ové. But the current debate has gone beyond the simple alternatives of realism and anti-realism.

Significantly, it is around the issue of audiences and "community" that a new kind of "third option" has emerged, most clearly argued for at Edinburgh by H.O. Nazareth. Rejecting the labels of both "multi-culturalism" and "anti-racism," he opposed the assumption that black film practice should devote itself to the expression of "ethnic protest." There is a valid point here, but his related argument for rejecting the "community" as reference point or addressee of black film discourse caused much concern, as it seemed to imply an unaccountable auteurism as the only alternative. Illustrating his argument with his experience of adverse criticism while working on a film on domestic violence within the Asian community, Nazareth argued that the "community" functions as a censor. This position seems a difficult one to maintain. It would be hard to construe the Bengali community's vocal displeasure with Farrukh Dhondy's recent BBC TV drama, *King of the Ghetto*, for instance, as a form of censorship.

Although it is the case (and perhaps it shouldn't be) that black filmmakers are often held to ideological ransom by the question, "Who do you make your films for?," the space of community as a terrain of contested political opinions cannot be simply ignored or rejected *tout court*. Ceddo, for instance, place a great deal of emphasis (as does their new film, *Street Warriors*) on the community as the addressee of their practice. Moreover, Haile Gerima's triangular model for the social/cultural interaction of filmmaker/storyteller, activist/critic, and audience/community underlines the issues of modes of address, networks of exhibition, and forms of criticism that an "oppositional" black film practice *must* take on board. The new "neo-liberal" option, which embraces criteria of "professionalism" at the center of its practice, needs to be located in the contradictory influence of Channel Four as the principal funder of "independent" work. Either way, precisely because of this relationship, the fortunes of this new tendency will be one to watch.

In the midst of this questioning of "community," Sankofa's first feature production, *The Passion of Remembrance*, is especially interesting with its underlying theme of diversities and differences *within* black communities. As it interesperses between a narrative account of black experiences in eighties Britain a dialogue on the past and future of political protest, the film weaves a rich texture of questions about the role of memory in shaping our sense of identity. In this way it explores features of contemporary politics in Britain which escape simple explanations based on "race" alone, insisting on the multiple elements of race, class, gender, and sexuality that must figure in the consciousness of the political present. Beyond its intrinsic interest, the film is also important as a critical intervention that places issues of gender in the foreground, which may be seen as an effect of the way that black feminisms have reshaped the terrain of debate in the sphere of cultural politics. This may in turn be seen as analogous to the creative effects of the proliferation of writing by black women on feminist politics. Certainly such a priority of gender is not "new," as earlier independent films such as Menelik Shabazz's *Burning an Illusion* demonstrate. But what adds an important dimension today is the parallel interest in racial/sexual politics signified by the recent mainstream success of films such as *My Beautiful Laundrette*. Given the peculiarities of Spielberg's rendition of Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, the debates around these commercial films may stimulate a wider reception and a wider audience for the more challenging work coming from the independent sector. In this respect it would be worth taking note of the crossover style of Spike Lee's problematic "comedy" of sexual (or sexist?) manners, *She's Gotta Have It*, a curious film that implicitly raises the question of *how* to distinguish mainstream/independent cinemas.

As a surface of emergence the Third Cinema conference raised more questions than it could answer. At the level of debates on aesthetics it registered the limitations of populist rhetoric and exposed new directions for theory and critique. Kenyan novelist Ngugi Wa Thiongo's suggestion that the struggles of the Third World resonate in the popular memory and imagination of all social groups and peoples contesting oppression points to the possibilities of a wider, demarginalized, audience for a Third Cinema. At the level of film practice, the concept may even be relevant for First World practitioners whose modernist strategies have been called into question by both post-modernism and neo-conservatism. In both respects the event has important implications for institutions with an interest in revitalizing an active, independent film culture. The fact its debates were sponsored by the British Film Institute—whereas two or three years ago they would have taken place in the seminars and screenings organised by the Black Audio Film Collective, for instance—suggests a process of demarginalization which will hopefully continue into higher education.

Kobena Mercer works at the Centre for Caribbean Studies at Goldsmith's College, London.

The 41st Annual Edinburgh International Film

Festival will take place on Aug. 8-23, 1987. Formats: 16mm, 35mm; 1/2" and 3/4" video OK for preview. Prefers "new and rare works." Categories: features, shorts, documentaries. Noncompetitive; all films receive Certificate of Participation. Films must have been completed after Aug. 1985. Deadlines: May 11 films, entry forms; June 12 documentation, stills. Entry fee: £10. Fest. does not pay shipping. Contact: Jim Hickey, director, Filmhouse, 88 Lothian Rd., Edinburgh EH3 9B2, Scotland; tel. 031-228-2688; telex 72165.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement** & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

AMERICAN MEDICAL WRITERS ASSN 11TH VIDEO & FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 4-7, Chicago, IL. Feature films produced for the medical & allied health sciences in the categories of professional education, patient education, public info & general (public relations, promotion, docs). 1st & 2nd place & merit awards & "best of festival" award granted. Winning films shown at AMWA 47th Annual Conference at Drake Hotel. Entry fees: $70 members, $85 nonmembers. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Incl. supplementary materials: brochures, guidebooks, tests, etc. Deadline: April 30. Contact Edith Stern, AMWA Video & Film Festival Chair, Continuing Ed., Johns Hopkins Univ. School of Medicine, 720 Rutland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21205; (301) 955-6908.

COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 19-22, Columbus, OH. The 2nd annual edition of this Ohio State Univ.-sponsored fest will present a varied show of new video works at the Silver Image Gallery in Columbus. Cats incl. video art (images, structural, animated), doc, educational, narrative & other. Last year's fest incl. winning entries by Irit Batsiy, Anne Seidman & Appalshop & was judged by Nancy Robinson, asst. curator of video at Wexner Center for the Arts & ind. videographer Linda Thornburgh. Entry fees: $10-20 depending on length; cash prizes $50-75. Formats: 1/2" & 3/4". Deadline: May 1. Contact Susan Halpern, Dept. of Art, Ohio State Univ., 146 Hopkins Hall, Columbus, OH 43210; (614) 292-6711.

DORE SCHARY AWARDS, June, New York, NY. Competition for student-produced films & videos on human relations themes: "people & their experiences," "search for ethnicity," "coming together in understanding." Student/faculty advisor letter must accompany entries. Judges incl. Bayard Rustin, Merv Adelson, Jack Valenti, David Rothenberg, Jacqueline Grennen-Wexler, Arthur Hiller & Bonnie Franklin. 1st prizes of $1000 & 2nd prizes of $500 last year went to *Dark Exodus*, by Iverson White, *The New Puritans: The Sikhs of Yuba City*, by Tenzing Sonam & Ritu Sarin, *Debonair Dancers*, by Allison Nigh-Strelich & *Los Ninos Thinking about Others*, by Francisco Menendez & Charles Lake. Winners flown to NY for awards ceremony, which is part of the Anti-Defamation League Nat'l Commission meeting. Formats: 16mm & 3/4". Deadline: May 1. Contact Steve Brody/Zirel Handler, Dore Schary Awards, TV Radio Film Dept., Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 823 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017; (212) 490-2525.

HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 29-Dec. 6, Honolulu, HI. The ongoing theme of this noncommercial, noncompetitive fest is "When Strangers Meet," encouraging audiences to learn about other cultures through cinema. Selected films reflect a "humanistic perspective" of the lives & intercultural relationships between people of the US, Asia & the Pacific. Last year over 50,000 people attended the free screenings & seminars; 42 features, 73 docs & 12 short films shown. In 1986 fest's only award, the East West Center Award for the entry best promoting the festival's theme of intercultural understanding went to Thai director Euthania Mukdasnit's feature *Butterflies Are Free* & special award was given to *The Time to Live & the Time to Die*, by Taiwan director Hon Xiaoxian. Judges incl. Susan Sontag, Sashi Kapoor, Bill Bennett, Nei Kawarabata & Lino Brocka, who was also the keynote speaker. Main focus of '86 was comedy, promoting an understanding of the relationship between culture & humor & 20 comedies from 6 countries were presented, along w/ retrospective of Harry Shearer's comedies. Films screened incl. *The New Morning of Billy the Kid*, by Naoto Yamakawa; *Joshua Then & Now*, by Ted Kotcheff; *Malcolm*, by Nadia Tass & *She's Gotta Have It*, by Spike Lee. Other focuses were Australian cinema, featuring *Burke & Wills*, by Graeme Clifford & Pacific Island films, w/ 19 films covering a range of issues affecting the Pacific, incl. nuclear testing, Maori rebellion, apartheid & New Zealand sports & influence of Western culture in the Pacific. Several Asian American films participated, including *Jazz Is My Native Language*, by Renee Cho; *Made in China*, by Lisa Hsia; *Living on Tokyo Time*, by Steven Okazaki, which premiered at the festival & *Beacon Hill Boys*, by Dean Hayasaka, Ken Mochizuki & William Blauvelt. The growing fest attracts an increasing amount of int'l press & critical coverage & over 150 filmmakers & industry professionals are expected to participate this year. Featured programming for '87 fest incl. retrospective of films from Korea & program on Orson Welles' influence on Asian cinema. Following the fest's run on Oahu, it travels to Kauai, Maui, Lanai & Moloka. 1/2", Beta, 3/4" & 16mm accepted for preview; final format 16mm or 3/4". No entry fee. Deadline: June 1. Contact Jeanette Paulson, coordinator, HIFF, East West Center, 1777 East-West Rd, Honolulu, HI 96848; (808) 944-7666.

JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL: INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS LOOKING AT OURSELVES, Aug., San Francisco, CA. The Jewish subject films chosen for this noncompetitive festival are programmed in the hope that



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they will break old stereotypes of the Jewish media image. Last year's films drew audiences of 10,000 through 6 days in San Francisco & 4 days in Berkeley. About half of the films are by US independents. Fest pays individ. negotiated rental fees. '86 fest premiered *Partisans of Vilna*, by Josh Wiletsky & Aviva Kempner & also featured *Free Voice of Labor,* by Steve Fischler & Joel Sucher. For the last few years, organizers have mounted national tours of participating films & hope to have NY location in '87. No entry fee. Cats: new works, history/ culture/identity. Deadline: May 1. Contact Deborah Kaufman/Janis Plotkin, Jewish Film Festival, 2600 10th St., Berkeley, CA 94710; (415) 499-6400.

New Jersey Video & Film Festival & Conference, June 19, Newark, NJ. Sponsored by Newark MediaWorks, a nonprofit media arts production & training center, this 4th annual festival highlights ind. films & videos related to NJ, produced by a NJ producer, shot in the state, or on a NJ subject. Fest presented in conjunction w/ conference on May 15 at the Newark Marriott Hotel. This year's theme is "Media Makers: Visions & Realities," featuring panels on distribution, video art & funding w/ emphasis on obtaining state monies. Last year's jury screened over 150 entries & the winning films & videos were presented awards before an audience of 250. Among winners were *The Locust,* by Paul B. Holzman, festival best; *The Fall of the House of Usher* by John Schnall, *The Liberating Man,* by Emily Hubley & *Rock 'n' Roll Pet Store* by Michael Posch, all taking 1st place in art/ experimental cat. 1987 judges incl. Bonnie Friedman, ind. producer; Julie Gustafson, Global Village; Shalom Gorewitz, video artist; Black Maria Film Festival director John Columbus; Lawrence Londino, NYU Dept. of Film & TV; Kathleen Roe, WNET/ Newark; Bettie Davie, ind. producer; Thomas Guy, Gateway Cable; Lynn Miller, Rutgers Univ. Cats: doc, short doc, art experimental/ animation, feature/fiction/drama, dramatic short, news, student, music video, corporate promo, public access. Prizes incl. equipment, edit time, tapes & cash. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: May 30. Contact: Dana Kenney/Tami Gold, Newark MediaWorks, Box 1716, Newark, NJ 07101; (201) 690-5474.

Philadelphia International Film & Video Festival/Philafilm, July 22-26, Philadelphia, PA. The 10th anniv. theme of Philafilm is "Filmmaking & Democracy: A History of Perspectives," tied to the Constitution's bicentennial celebration. Organizers hope to attract ind. films that reflect the building of American ideals by challenging & critically analyzing the nat'l & int'l impact of those ideals. Last year's fest incl. 45 entries, w/ Best Film award going to *Samuel Lount,* by Elvira Lount & Laurence Keane. Other awards went to *Memories of Monet,* by Meredith Martindale & Toby Molenaar, best doc; *Destination: Nicaragua,* by Barbara Trent & David Kasper, best video documentary; *Grafitti,* by Diana Costello & Matthew Patrick, best cinematography; *Annie & Melvin,* by Douglas Varchol, best student film. Other awards went to *Kid Gloves,* by Richard Margoles, Bill Dominguez & Vince DiPersio & *The Flapper Story,* by Lauren Lazin. Judges last year were Michelle Casale, Philip Verrechia & Harold Yates, all ind. producers in PA. Fest format also incl. directors' seminars & workshops, this year featuring aninvestors' seminar for low-budget ind. films. Cash prizes: $100 for top entries, $75 for 2nd place awards. All entrants receive certificate. Steep entry fees, from $20/student films to $100/feature entries. Last year's audience was disappointingly low, causing particular consternation to some makers who travelled a distance to participate. Director Larry Smallwood hopes that the addition of performance & art exhibit components coupled w/ bicentennial celebration will boost this year's attendance. Sponsored by Int'l Assoc. of Motion Picture & TV Producers. Cats: feature, doc, animation, experimental, drama/ short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 8mm, 3/4". Dead - line: May 15. Contact: Larry Smallwood, festival director, 121 N. Broad St, 6th fl, Philadelphia, PA 19107; (215) 977-2831.

PSA-VMPD American International Film & Video Festival, Aug. 3-8, Long Beach, CA. Showcase for work of amateur video & filmmakers, now in 58th year & advertised as "the world's oldest motion picture competition." Entries must be under 30 minutes & are accepted in cats of commercial, noncommercial, student, teenage & video. Winning entries shown at the annual Photographic Society of America convention; nonprofit org. boasts 18,000 members. Prizes of trophies, plaques & certificates in additional categories of travel, humor, editing, experimental, doc, best story. Entry fees: $12 members, $17 nonmembers, $10 teenage. Deadline: May 15. Contact Tim W. Kinnally, FSAC Chairman, American International Film & Video Festival, 6618 Parkside Dr., Tinley Park, IL 60477; (312) 532-2540.

Robert Flaherty Film Seminar, Aug. 9-15, Aurora, NY. The theme of the 33rd annual wk. of day-long sessions of screenings & intensive debate on the nature of filmmaking which characterize this seminar/workshop/retreat is "media criticism." Seminar will focus on recently completed docs & features that challenge the dominant media's coverage of social issues as well as alternative strategies for activating audiences. The programming for this year, as in the past, will feature expressions of third world cultures which have been historically & currently excluded from western media. Participants have variously termed the sessions as "incisive," "provocative" & "candid." Last year's theme, representations of diverse cultural perspectives in film & video, was the context for the screening of such works as *Twenty Years Later,* by Eduardo Coutinho; *Routine Pleasures,* by Jean-Pierre Gorin; *The Aids Show,* by Peter Adair & Robert Epstein & Joan Logue's videos. Contact this year's programmer before submitting films & tapes: Richard Herskowitz, Cornell Cinema, 525 Willard Straight Hall, Ithaca, NY 14583; (607) 255-3522. Deadline for completion of selections: June 1. For all other information contact seminar coordinator Esme Dick, International Film Seminars, 44 W. 56 St., 3rd fl., New York, NY 10019; (212) 582-0273.

San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, June 19-28, San Francisco, CA. The oldest & largest festival celebrating films & videos by & about lesbians & gay men, this fest enters 11th year w/ expanding audience of over 15,000. Each year it kicks off San Francisco's Lesbian/Gay Freedom Celebration. Sponsored by nonprofit lesbian & gay media arts org. Frameline, the fest screened over 70 films & videos last year, incl. submitted & invited works & also featured retrospective & section showcasing recent discoveries of archival films. Awards presented in 6 cats: feature, short, video, doc, super 8 & Audience Prize for best in festival. 1986 saw the Dutch film *Pervola, Tracks in the Snow,* by Orlow Seunke, win the Audience Prize, while *The Aids Show,* by Robert Epstein & Peter Adair, captured award for best doc. 1987 venues will be Castro Theatre, Roxie Cinema & Video Free America. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4" & 1/2". Deadline: April 15. Contact Michael Lumpkin, Frameline, Box 14792, San Francisco, CA 94114; (415) 861-5245.

Slice of Life Showcase, July 10-12, State College, PA. Seeks experimental or doc works depicting "the unique performances of everyday life—those moments of truth & beauty that would otherwise go unrecognized." Sponsored by Documentary Resource Center, fest also hosts "meet the artists" reception & conference, which has in the past incl. reps from NEA, Center for Southern Folklore & EFLA. Last year winning works were *Eugene's Valet,* by Jane Chapline; *Vidalia McCloud: A Family Story,* by Theresa Mack; *Veteran's Day,* by P.J. O'Connell; *Eula* by Sharon Zurek & Lucinda Guard & *Halloween '85,* by George Hornbein & Ken Thigpen. Fest pays travel stipend & will accommodate filmmakers in area homes. All entrants receive cash awards of approx. $250. Entry fee: $10. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: May 1. Contact Mike Bagwell/George Hornbein, Slice of Life Showcase, 740 Elmwood St, State College, PA 16801; (814) 234-7886.

Works by Women, Oct., New York, NY. Seeks to promote accomplishments of women directors in ind. film & video. Now in 11th year, noncompetitive fest provided a showcase last year for the premiere of *Dust,* by Marion Hansel, as well as *Women of Summer,* by Suzanne Baumann & *Dialectics of Romance,* by Anne-Sargent Wooster. Judges incl. Annette Insdorf, assoc. prof of film at Yale & Columbia & Barbara London, asst. curator for video in MoMA's Film Dept., who also presented program of "Video Pioneers: Women in Independent Video." Out of 300 submissions, judges selected 12 videos, 1 feature, 2 docs & 1 animated short. No entry fee. Fest pays return shipping & negotiated rental on each film or video shown. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: April 30. Contact Christina Bickford, Media Services, Barnard College Library, B'way at 117th S., New York, NY 10027; (212) 280-2418.

FOREIGN

Locarno International Film Festival, Aug. 6-16, Locarno, Switzerland. This year marks the 40th anniversary of this fest, whose stated purpose is "to enable filmmakers from all over the world to examine & compare—in a spirit of mutual understanding—the most recent developments in the quest for new methods of cinematographic expression." Sections incl. int'l competition for fiction films, section covering cinematic history & special section for full-length features produced for TV. Films must be a Swiss premiere, completed in the 12 months prior to fest, over 60 mins & subtitled in French. Selection preference isgiven to world premieres or films which have not been entered in other major Euro fests. Top prizes incl. Golden Leopard: 10,000 Swiss frances, for

best film; Silver Leopard: 5000 francs, for best 1st or 2nd film by a new director & Bronze Leopard: 3000 francs, to the most exceptional director, actor, or actress. *Variety* has termed Locarno "the last refuge of small inexpensive pictures which would be lost completely in other circumstances." All leading Swiss film distribs & exhibitors, numbering about 150, attended last year's fest, as well as reps from such major European fests as Cannes, Hof, Berlin & Mannheim. US entries incl. *Down by Law,* by Jim Jarmusch, which broke attendance records, *Sleepwalk,* by Sara Driver & *She's Gotta Have It,* by Spike Lee. Fest doesn't pay shipping or subtitling costs. Formats: 16mm & 35mm. No entry fee. Deadline: May 31 for entry forms, June 15 for prints for selection. Contact Locarno International Film Festival, Box 6600, Locarno, Switzerland.

ODENSE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 1-7, Odense, Denmark. 7th biennial fest programmed for "unusual films w/ an original & imaginative sense of creative delight"—all in the spirit of master fairytale writer & Odense native Hans Christian Anderson. Entries should be fairy tales, films of fantasy, or experimental-imaginative work, live or animated, no longer than 60 mins, completed after '83. Condition for entry is that the film may be shown on Danish TV w/ "normal fee" paid. 8 prizes awarded by int'l jury, which this year will consist of James Broughton, US; Bert Hanstra, Holland; Svend Hansen, Denmark; Borge Ring, Holland & Bente Hansen, Denmark. Cash prizes: from $2,100-$5,000 awarded in cats of best film, most imaginative film & most surprising film. In addition, each judge awards his/her personal prize (statuette) & children's jury awards 3 prizes. In 1985, w/ over 140 filmmakers attending & 68 films screened out of 158 entries from 29 countries, 2 US films won prizes: *Why'd the Beetle Cross the Road?,* by Jan E. Skrentny (best film) & *Hello,* by Faith Hubley (judge's prize). Fest also features large film wrkshp for children & retrospective series. Return shipping paid for selected entries. Work may be preselected on 1/2" or 3/4"; fest format 16mm or 35mm. Deadline: May 15. Appl. forms available at FIVF, or contact Jorgen Roos/Astrid Henning-Jensen, 7th International Odense Film Festival, Vindegade 18, DK-5000, Odense C, Denmark; tel: 459131372 x4294.

TURIN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 16-25, Torino, Italy. US ind. filmmakers can find a haven at this northern Italian festival as it enters its 5th year w/ a history of showcasing innovative US work before audiences of over 50,000. Competitive feature & short film sections. Its Open Space section (in which entrants must be under 30 yrs old) features noncompetitive shorts, video & super 8 categories in & out of competition. Feature films in competition vie for three awards: best film, jury award & best actor/actress. Feature prize is City of Turin Award plaque; $3000 goes to best short film, $2000 to best video & $1500 to winning super 8 film. Fest provides round trip airfare, hotel & meals for all filmmakers in the feature section; all other filmmakers receive hospitality. Round trip shipping charges also covered. This year's theme: films from 1st time filmmakers/ films dedicated to young people, which, while not restrictive, encourages the submission of works by new directors. Each film has press conference; Euro. press reps & Italian producers & distribs very much in attendance. A retrospective of Soviet independent cinema will highlight this year's festival. Last year, retrospective showcased US ind. cinema of the '60s; an anthology of films from the Women in Film Festival was also on the program. Winning US entries in 1986 were *Grafitti,* by Diana Costello & Matthew Patrick (Jury Award) & *Triangle Below Canal,* by Harry Killas (best short); other US feature entries incl. *Static,* by Mark Romanek; *Rate It X,* by Paula de Koenigsburg, Lucy Winer & Claudette Charbonneau; *Down by Law,* by Jim Jarmusch & *Jimi Plays Monterey,* by D.A. Pennebaker. US shorts in competition, among others, were *Tom Goes to the Bar,* by Dean Parisot; *One Small Step,* by J. Mira Kopell; *Ringers,* by Tony Cookson & *Night Train,* by Phillipe Browning. Last year's judges in feature section were Robert Kramer, Jean Rouch, Sogo Ishii, Amos Bow & Guiseppe Bertolucci. Short film judges were Robert Aaronson, Otto Grokenberger & Lyz Reinisch. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 1/2", 3/4". Entry fee: $10 features, $5 shorts (under 60 minutes). Deadline: July 10, enter early. Guido Chiesa, fest's NY rep, will pre-select. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes only. Contact Guido Chiesa, c/o FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012; (212) 529-6799.

WELLINGTON FILM FESTIVAL, July, Wellington, New Zealand. Noncompetitive 16th edition run in conjunction w/ 19th Auckland Film Festival & sponsored by New Zealand Federation of Film Societies & Wellington Film Society. Both fests generally feature the same program & seek feature & short films which "contribute to a knowledge of new styles & trends in filmmaking." Films must have been shown at fests outside New Zealand & be NZ premieres. Certificates of participation awarded all invited films. Last year's Wellington & Auckland festivals showed 50 features apiece before audiences of almost 100,000. Return shipping paid. Formats: 16mm, 35mm (preferred); 70mm. 1/2" & 3/4" accepted for preview. Deadline: April 30. Contact Bill Gosden, director, Wellington Film Festival, Box 9544, Courtenay Place, Wellington, New Zealand; tel: 850-162.

INDEPENDENT BOOKSHELF

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Compilation of two years of festival columns published in The Independent.
Info on over 300 festivals in the U.S. and abroad: awards, contacts, fees, previous participants.

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Advice on film and video financing; investor presentations; limited partnerships; market research, distribution; list of buyers of non-theatrical films; pay TV, foreign TV and home video, contacts for music videos.

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MIAMI WAVELENGTHS



In his film, *Illuminated Texts, 1987 (Fool's Gold)*, Bruce Elder elaborates the historic conflict between science and the sacred. The film, part of a larger project, was screened and discussed at the Miami Waves Festival last fall.

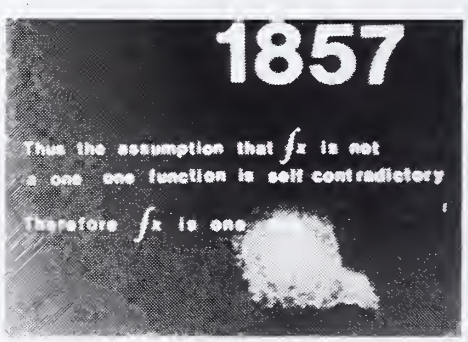
Courtesy filmmaker

Jay Murphy

In June 1981 Miami artists Bruce Posner and Marilyn Gottlieb-Roberts turned their popular monthly programs of avant-garde films into Film Forms, a series that coupled screenings with appearances by visiting experimental filmmakers. That autumn, performance artist Mary Luft inaugurated the Miami Waves Experimental Media Festival in her backyard, featuring performance art and new music, with Posner and Gottlieb-Roberts programming films and coordinating the event. In later years the festival was held at the downtown Miami-Dade Community College campus, and the annual budget grew from $500 to more than $25,000. In 1987, the festival's traditional Buzzard Ball and other performance events will become an activity separate from the film festival. The festival's film/video component will become part of the Miami-Dade Book Fair, and in 1988 will be linked with New Music America, being held in Miami. Monthly screenings of independent cinema by Southeast artists continue under the direction of Don Chauncey at the Miami-Dade Public Library, a project spawned by the Waves Festival.

The late November 1986 Miami Waves' chock-full three-day schedule was marked by the intertwined themes of sex and doomsday, in the work of controversial Canadian independent filmmaker Bruce Elder, as well as in much of the commentary of Stan Brakhage, the other guest filmmaker, as well as in Red Spot's slide projections and in the slide/tape *Ballad of Sexual Dependency*, by Nan Goldin. These were also common motifs in the hours of classic avant-garde films, including Richard Leacock et al.'s election trail 1960 cinema verité *Primary*, Jean Genet's *Un Chant d'Amour*, offerings from the French Lettrists, and from such pioneering spirits of U.S. underground cinema as Sidney Peterson, Marie Menken, Joseph Cornell, and Jonas Mekas. From Barbara Rubin's 1963 *Christmas on Earth* to Kurt Kren's rapid-fire, clipped documents of Material-Action and Gunther Brus' performance art actions of the mid-sixties, eroticism was emphasized throughout the festival.

Guest artist Bruce Elder showed *Illuminated Texts, 1857 (Fools' Gold)* and his 1979 *Art of Worldly Wisdom*, all parts of his marathon project illustrating the progressive destruction of human consciousness since Isaac Newton. While deeply influenced by Brakhage's dense layering techniques, Elder has also been inspired by Eisenstein's project for an "intellectual cinema" and his plans to make a film explicating the three-volume *Capital*. Elder's virulently anti-Enlightenment films rely somewhat on found footage and on pastiche and quotations from Blake, Milton, Henry Adams, and Pound. Elder's subtly color-coded films move from a cry against the technological rationalization of humanity to an elegy for the experience and concept of the sacred that has been lost. "I think it's obvious how all of this is going to end," Elder told his audience. At the first screenings of Elder's work, Brakhage suggested that the next project a beginning experimental filmmaker might un-



dertake would be a film that conveys "orgasmic joy at the annihilation of the world." This, Brakhage said, would be logical as a sequel to Elder's works, which he termed modern masterpieces.

Brakhage was on hand for various screenings of his own work during the festival, including not only the early epic *Dog Star Man* but his first film, *Desistfilm*, completed in 1954. He also screened recent work illustrating Dante, using I-Max film copied onto 16mm. The handpainted I-Max film frame, equal to eight 35mm frames, allows an illusionistic depth of field found only in painting. *The Garden of Earthly Delights* and *Existence Is Song* were screened along with Brakhage's interpretations of *The Inferno* and *The Purgatorio*, which recalled the work of the action and abstract expressionist painters of the fifties and sixties.

The theme of "painting Hell itself" led Brakhage into an embittered discussion of current U.S. cultural politics. "When my phone rings, it's another horror story," he exclaimed. "I don't know one person who is making a living doing what they do best, and that is a sad comment on our civilization." He continued pessimistically, "I live near Boulder, Colorado, one of the largest concentrations of germ warfare in the country, where they make three nuclear weapons every day," adding that if his own work was not "life-generative, it's just wallpaper for the brain." Brakhage's jeremiad provided a sobering end to the three days of film exhibition and discussions of avant-garde aesthetics.

Jay Murphy is editor of Red Bass *magazine in Tallahassee and a regional editor of* Art Papers *in Atlanta.*

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CINEMA GUILD seeks film & video programs suitable for release through its new home video division. Contact Gary Crowdus, Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, New York, NY 10019; (212) 246-5522.

WORKING FREQUENCIES: Radio prod. team seeks audio/radio programs about work-related issues for upcoming guide & listening workshops. For more info write Working Frequencies, 291 Smith St., Brooklyn, NY 11231.

NEW DAY FILMS: Self-distrib. coop for independent prods. seeks new members w/ recent social issue docs. Priority areas: culture, environment, family, gay/lesbian, health, handicapped, labor, minority. Also progressive films for young people. Appl. deadline: May 1. For info, write Ralph Arlyck, 79 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE is looking for features, shorts, docs & videos w/ distinct American regional flavor, for major retrospective in May '88. Send preview prints, written material, or contact by phone: David Schwartz, American Museum of the Moving Image, 34-12 36th St. Astoria, NY 11106. (718) 784-4520.

FILMS & VIDEOS of interest to children. Can be completed or out-takes but must be owned by artist. Footage featuring different cultures & foreign countries especially desired. Send films/ videos w/ return postage to Oswego Art Guild, Box 315, Fort Ontario Pk., Oswego, NY 13126; (315) 342-3579.

FILMS & VIDEOS for Herland Film/Video Festival. May 1-3. For & about women, all genres. $5 per entry. Postmarked by Apr. 18 w/return postage incl. Contact Herland, Oswego Art Guild, Box 315, Fort Ontario Pk., Oswego, NY 13126; (315) 342-3579.

Conferences ○ Workshops

CHICAGO AREA FILM & VIDEO NETWORK will present the 2nd Independent Film & Video Conference at the Getz Theater, Columbia College, 72 E. 11th St., Chicago, IL, June 5-7. Focus on strategies to strengthen Chicago's creative media arts community. Panels on public TV, public access, independent feature film financing, special interest home videos, etc. Contact Paddy Marcotte or Howard Gladstone, Chicago Area Film & Video Network, Box 10657, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 276-8654.

GLOBAL VILLAGE Video Study Center: Summer Courses begin week of June 8: Intensive & Advanced Intensive Video; Music Video; Electronic Video Editing & Intro to Computer Editing; Advanced Computer Videotape Editing; Documentary Video & Intensive Workshop in Video Electronics-FCC License. Credits available through New School for Social Research. Contact Global Village, 454 Broome St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 966-7526.

NFCB PUBLIC RADIO Training Conference. Boulder, Colorado, July 3-6. Contact Pat Watkins, Nat'l Federation of Community Broadcasters, 1314 14th St., NW, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 797-8911.



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INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION ASSN 19th annual conference will be held at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, DC, May 27-30. Theme is "Int'l Crossroads" w/ over 90 workshops for professionals in prod. & mgmt of nonbroadcast video. Culminates in Video Awards Ceremony for Golden & Silver Reel honors. Registration before May 4: $390 ITVA members; $100 students; $490 nonmembers; $135 nonmember students. Increases after May 4. Hotel accomodations, $80/night. Contact ITVA, 6311 N. O'Connor Rd. #110, Irving, TX 75039; (214) 869-1112.

NEW YORK INTL HOME VIDEO MARKET: Independent Producers Market will be held at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Ctr., New York City, Apr. 21-23. Contact Barbara Anne Stockwell, asst. vp, Knowledge Industry Publications, 701 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY 10604; (914) 328-9157.

VOICES OF DISSENT: A Symposium on the Arts as a Force for Social Change. April 10-12. Philadelphia. Sponsored by the Painted Bride Art Center, coordinated by Big Small Theater. 20 plenaries, performances & workshops incl. sessions on censorship and free speech, cultural animation, black women in song, Native American arts activism, cross gender roleplaying, collective art movement in Mexico & more. Plus benefit reading for Margaret Randall featuring Sonia Sanchez & Dennis Brutus. Registration: $25-50. For info contact Jenney Milner, Voices of Dissent/PBAC, 230 Vine St., Philadelphia, PA 19106; (215) 925-9914.

Opportunities ○ Gigs

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WANTED: Woman film editor who knows Spanish to volunteer w/ doc group in Nicaragua. Approximately 6 wks editing in wkshp-demo situation. Call Herman Engel, Four Corners Prods; (212) 505-1990.

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VIDEOGRAPHERS/INSTRUCTORS/EDITORS: Summer positions available w/ Legacy Int'l Youth Program. Seeks highly motivated individuals for exceptional intercultural experience w/ youth in foothills of Blue Ridge Mtns. Duties incl. program documentation, video instruction & planning work for potential documentaries & curriculum series. Interviewing now. June 14-Aug. 16. Non-smokers, EOE. Located 4 hrs. south of Washington, DC. Call (703) 297-5982.

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PRODUCERS W/ DISTRIBUTION RIGHTS: Horizon Videos seeks films & videos of all genres for TV, cable & home distribution in Israel. Send titles & synopses to H.V., 11 Brookside Cr., Bronxville, NY 10708.

CHOREOGRAPHER: Independent choreographer seeks opportunity to collaborate w/ film/video artist. List of credentials incl. Robert Altman's *Rake's Progress* & CBS TV dance consultant. Call Carole, (718) 693-3691, NYC.

RESIDENCIES: film/video/photo at Oswego Art Guild's equipment access facility & studios. Residencies of 1-9 months w/ or w/out stipends. Send resumé & sample work w/ return postage to Oswego Art Guild, Box 315, Fort Ontario Pk., Oswego, NY 13126; (315) 342-3579.

VIDEO GRANTS: Barbara Aronofsky Latham Memorial Grants for Video & Electronic Visualization Art/History, Theory & Criticism of Video or Electronic Visualization Art. Work-in-progress or new projects. $300-$1500. 18 yrs & older eligible. Deadline: postmarked by Apr. 15. For appl. guidelines contact Office of the Dean, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Columbus Dr. at Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 443-3937.

MEDIA INSTALLATION COMPETITION: The Visual Studies Workshop will select a new media installation work for exhibition. The selected artist will receive honorarium of $1,000. Open to artists living anywhere in U.S. Deadline for proposals: May 15. Contact Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince St., Rochester, NY 14607; (716) 442-8676.

Publications ○ Software

CABLE PROGRAMMING Resource Directory now available from Nat'l Federation of Local Cable Programmers. Lists over 1100 locations that produce access or local origination programming w/ info on staff, mgmt, programming, equip. & facilities.

Also comprehensive listing of cable programming sources, directory of satellite services & list of int'l programming sources grouped by country. Price: $34.95. Call NFLCP Nat'l Office; (202) 544-7272 or write NFLCP, 906 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20003.

AMERICAN FILM DISTRIBUTION: *The Changing Marketplace*, by Suzanne Mary Donahue, offers practical info on the business of motion picture distribution w/ emphasis on new venues for ind. filmmakers. $49.95 from UMI Research Press, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106; (800) 521-0600/(313) 761-4700.

Resources ○ Funds

MEDIA GRANTS for social issue media projects will be administered through Paul Robeson Fund for Film & Video of the Funding Exchange. Deadline: May 1. Write Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

NAT'L ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS: Arts Management Fellowships to arts administrators at the Endowment offices in Wash. DC. Deadline: Apr. 17. Contact NEA Visual Arts Program, (202) 682-5448.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING Open Solicitations deadlines: May 1. Contact CPB, Program Fund, 1111 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

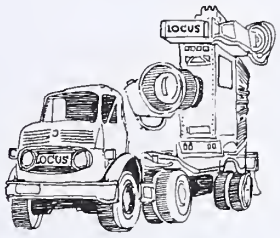
FILM BUREAU: Grants avail. to nonprofit NYS-based organizations for exhibition programs. Supports wide variety of programs, from annual film fests to special screenings at local libraries, galleries & community centers. Matching funds of up to $300 avail. for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Priority given to organizations showing works by independent filmmakers &/or films not ordinarily avail. to the public. Deadlines: June 15, Aug. 15. Contact Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

FILM IN THE CITIES: Regional grants available to film/video artists residing in IA, MN, ND, SD & WI. Max. request of $16,000 for new works & $6,500 for completion. Deadline: Apr. 3. Appl. workshops available in each state. Contact Film in the Cities; (612) 646-6104.

PHILADELPHIA INDEPENDENT FILM/VIDEO ASSN. subsidy grants avail. to members of PIFVA; funds provided by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. Funds awarded for specific, targeted services vital to the project's completion, performed at below commercial rates. Average grants $250-500. Deadlines: Apr. 1, June 1. For apps, contact PIFVA, Int'l House, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 387-5125.

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Trims & Glitches

CONGRATULATIONS to winners of the New York State Council on the Arts distribution grants to individual filmmakers: Mirra Bank, *Spirit to Spirit*; Suzanne Bauman, *Cuba*; Alan Berliner, *Family Albums*; Christine Choy & Renee Tajima, *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*; Peter Davis, *The Borscht Belt*; Deborah Dickson, *Frances Stelloff*; Janet Forman, *The Beat Generation*; Su Friedrich, *The Ties That Bind*; Sharon Greytak, *Weirded Out & Blown Away*; Henry Hills, *Money*; Manny Kirchheimer, *We Were So Beloved*; Sheila McLaughlin, *She Must Be Seeing Things*; Jane Morrison, *Master Smart Women*; Brent Owens, *A Cry for Help*; Robert Richter, *Do Not Enter: The Visa War against Ideas* & Lucy Winer & Paula de Koenigsburg, *Rate It X*.

KUDOS to NYSCA Media Grant awardees Janet Kern, *Begin with Me*; Joan Jubela & Stan Davis, *Bombs Aren't Cool*; Daniel Riesenfeld, *Bopha*; Mark Mori, *Building Bombs*; Shirlee Jensen, *By the Light of the Moon*; Kate Purdie, *Career Women*; Jim Bradley, *Cause for Alarm*; Catherine Russo, *Comadres*; Mary Lance, *Diego Rivera Film*; Juan Andres Racz, *Dulce Patria*; Deborah Shaffer, *Fire from the Mountain*; Judea Crisfield, *For Freedom in South Africa*; Barbara Kristaphonis, *The Gourd of Anansa*; Pat Goudvis & Robert Richter, *Guatemala: A New Democracy*; John Junkerman, *Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima*; Liane Brandon, *How to Prevent a Nuclear War*; Rhyena Halpern, *Mom & Apple Pie*; Carole Langer, *Ottawa: The Betrayal of a Town*; Brenda King & Mary Beth Yarrow, *Out of the House*; Wynn Hausser, *A Question of Conscience: Sanctuary*; Ellin Stein, *The Secretary File*; Michelle Parkerson, *Stormé: The Lady in the Jewel Box*; Andrea Primdahl, *Stranger in Our Midst*; Olivia Carrescia, *Todos Santos: Survivors*; Ying Ying Wu, *Vietnam Vets: Dissidents for Peace* & Suzanne Lacy, *Whisper, the Waves, the Wind*.

KUDOS to 1986 film and video production grantees from the National Endowment for the Arts Media Program: Jane Aaron, Appalshop, Barbara Kopple, Roberta Cantow, Dan Reeves, Katherine Davis, Julia Reichert & Jim Klein, Gary Hill, Kathe Sandler, Steven Okazaki, Skip Battaglia, Haile Gerima, Mark Rappaport, Kathy Rose, Peter Rose, David Shulman, Edin Velez, Bill Viola, Paul Kos & Frederick Wiseman. DeeDee Halleck and the producers of the *Peliculas* project were approved by panel for funding in this cycle, but were rejected by the Endowment's National Council [see "Media Clips," November 1986].

NEA NORTHEAST & CARIBBEAN Regional Office has moved to Rm. 1803, 505 8th Ave., NY, NY 10018; (212) 564-0420. Ellen Thurston is the NEA's regional rep. for CT, DE, DC, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, PR & US Virgin Is.

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continued from page 36

The documentary tradition is one of the expression of strong points of view and passionately held beliefs. John Grierson proudly called filmmaking his "pulpit" and his films "propaganda." The finest American documentaries, from *The River* to *Harlan County, U.S.A.*, have been great precisely because they made strong and compelling statements artfully and persuasively. The misapplication of notions of objectivity and balance result only in a narrow range of nonfiction television drained of all passion and persuasion.

Moreover, the law requires nothing of the sort. Statutory requirements of objectivity and balance apply only to the overall schedule, not individual programs. Yet notions of objectivity and balance continue to limit the range of discussion of issues about which all views should be heard.

III. *PBS is not obtaining the highest quality national programming consistent with its unique mission.*

Public broadcasting has the mission of providing the public with television programming that is an alternative to commercial broadcasting. It was intended to be free of the commercial and demographic constraints necessary to make commercial broadcasting profitable.

In reality, however, financial and political pressures on the system have made it more "commercial." Where quality should be the only standard for program selection, underwritability has taken over. Corporate support amounts to only a relatively small percentage of total station or system budgets, but it is the money that calls the programming shots, with federal and membership funds more likely to cover station overhead.

Ratings, too, once the sole concern of commercial broadcasters, have taken a commanding role in public television programming. Inadequate federal funding has made membership contributions more important than ever. While, of course, audience numbers are important to consider, they are not always a measure of excellence or diversity. The endless stream of nature shows is a clear demonstration of where mass appeal leads in PTV programming. Independents are continually advised to propose projects with pledge night, rather than their principles, in mind.

The most effective way for PBS to encourage diversity and excellence in public broadcast programming, while maintaining balance and objectivity in the overall schedule, would be to eliminate the bottlenecks and obstacles to full participation of independent producers in the PBS schedule. AIVF is ready and willing to work with PBS to develop policies and procedures to achieve that goal and help bring the American public the innovative and diverse programming being produced within the American independent producer community.

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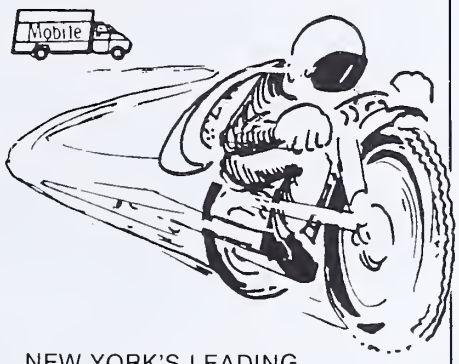
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AIVF/FIVF THANKS

The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film provide a variety of programs and services to the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, the FIVF Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearinghouse. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, organizations, and individuals:

Camera Mart, Inc.; Cinema 5 Theaters; Circle Releasing Corporation; Consolidated Edison Company of NY; Du Art Film Laboratories; Eastman Kodak Company; Film Equipment Rental Co.; the Ford Foundation; Guild Theatre Enterprises; Home Box Office, Inc.; Lubell & Lubell; Manhattan Cable Television; Morgan Guaranty Trust Company; Movielab Video; National Endowment for the Arts; New York State Council on the Arts; New York State Governor's Office for Motion Picture & Television Development; Orion Classics; Rockamerica; TVC Image Technology; *Uptown*, Manhattan's Moviechannel; the Walter Reade Organization; WNET/ Thirteen.

MAKING CHANGES

Debra Goldman, associate editor of *The Independent* for the past year and a half and frequent contributor to the magazine, left AIVF in early February to work as a freelance writer. Prior to assuming her editorial role, Debra worked as FIVF's seminar director and as the chief reporter for *The Independent*'s "Media Clips" column. And her detailed account of the first 10 years of AIVF's existence [in our January/February 1985 issue] earned her the position of unofficial AIVF historian, even *in absentia*.

Debra's desk in *The Independent*'s corner of the AIVF office will now be occupied by Patricia Thomson, who has been hired as managing editor for the magazine. Previously a freelance writer covering independent film and video, television, and advertising for numerous publications and a contributing editor of *The Independent*, Pat will take mangerial responsibility for the magazine as well as continuing to write on subjects concerning independent media for these pages.

ON PBS PUBLIC AFFAIRS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES: AN INDEPENDENT VIEW

Lawrence Sapadin

Ed.'s note: The following remarks on the Public Broadcasting Service's program policies and procedures were written and delivered before PBS's Special Committee, convened to review those policies and procedures, on February 3, 1987, by Lawrence Sapadin, executive director of AIVF. The Special Committee is chaired by E. William Henry, attorney and former FCC chair; the other members are Elie Abel, Honey Alexander, Burnhill Clark, Katherine Fanning, Stephen Greyser, William Kobin, William Sheehan, and Frederick Taylor, with PBS president Bruce Christensen and PBS board chair Alfred Stern acting as ex officio committee members.

This Special Committee has been charged to determine whether current PBS program policies and procedures encourage the highest quality program, provide reasonable access to diverse points of view, and reflect accepted journalistic standards. I will take the liberty of reordering these concerns and will begin with the issue of diversity. On this point, AIVF regrettably concludes:

I. *PBS program policies and procedures do not provide adequate access to the public television broadcast schedule for programs that reflect the great diversity of human though, expression, and experience.*

Independent producers are the primary vehicle by which public broadcasting achieves programming diversity. The House of Representatives, in its Report accompanying the 1984 Public Broadcasting Amendments Act, stated that:

> The promise of public broadcasting as a service offering a high quality, alternative programming fare aimed at enriching the cultural, informational, and educational needs of the public, is in large part attributable to the valuable input of independent producers.

Typically, independents work outside the mainstream networks and studios of New York and Los Angeles. They work close to their subjects, often spending years researching and even living with the people they film. They work regionally. They explore the offbeat. They bring to the media messages from the citizens of this large nation not traditionally represented on the television screen: women, minorities, union members, gays, and other under-represented constituencies. Independents are not classifiable politically: their work reflects the diversity of political life in this country and makes for a noisy, stimulating public discussion, if they have adequate access to the system.

However, there are substantial obstacles to independent access to the public airwaves:

1. *Scheduling limitations.* Independents typically produce single programs. Yet the system favors series. The independent producer who is not one of the privileged few whose work is suitable for *Frontline* or *American Playhouse* will only see the light of public TV air if his or her work is selected for a "Wednesday night special."

2. *Lack of acquisition funds.* Moreover, independents whose work *is* selected by PBS are often informed that PBS has no money for the acquisition and that the work must therefore be offered free.

3. *Lack of "step up" funds.* Should the producer agree to offer his/her program free in order to reach the largest potential audience, he/she is likely to be further advised by PBS that he/she will have to raise additional funds to cover the technical costs of preparing the program for national air and for promotion.

4. *Lack of promotional support.* Months having passed since the producer first contacted PBS, when the program is aired, few will see it due to the lack of promotional support afforded the independently produced single program.

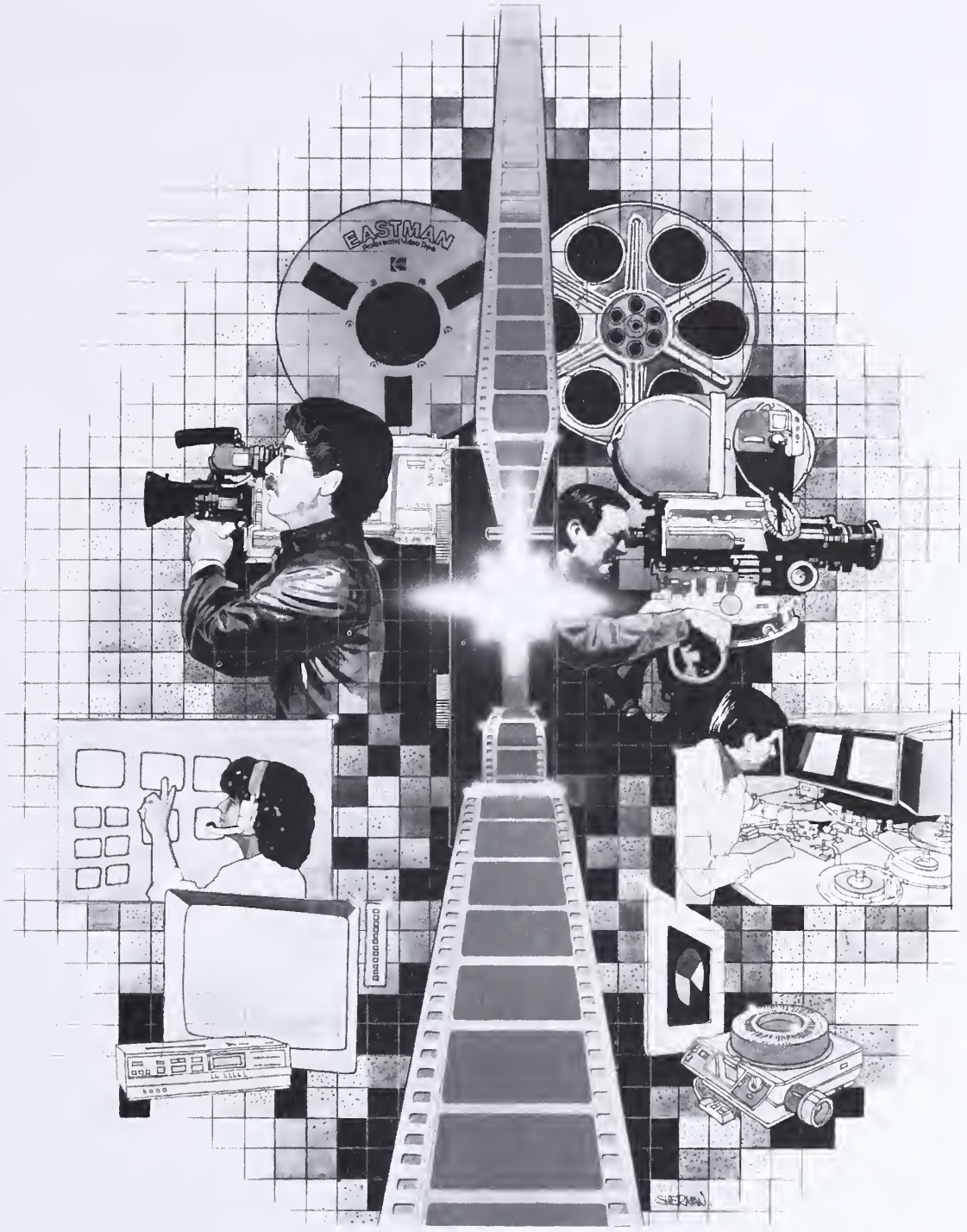
5. *Bureaucratic delay.* Throughout all of this unprofessional conduct will be the added burden of unnecessary delay. It will remain unclear to the producer who is making the decisions and when their program will be broadcast, if at all.

6. *Absence of clear underwriting and journalistic guidelines.* Added to the delay and financial hardship will be the impossibility of dealing with standards and guidelines, which are often unavailable. To independent producers, reference to "PBS Guidelines" has come to be more a matter of folklore than the invocation of written policies and practices.

II. *PBS policies fail to reflect the realities and requirements of nonfiction television programming.*

We are mindful of the context in which this review has been undertaken. Concern has been expressed about the political content of programs funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and/or distributed by PBS. We are mindful, but not sympathetic. So-called "accepted journalistic standards" apply to journalism, yet notions of balance and objectivity risk being applied by PBS to all nonfiction programs in a way which is dishonest, ineffective, and counterproductive to the mission of public broadcasting.

continued on page 35



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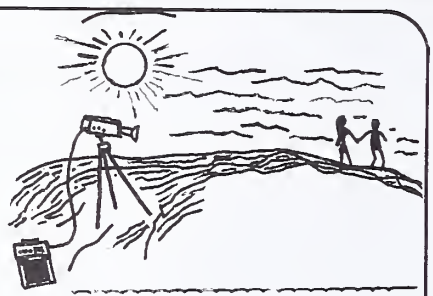
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COVER: While leftists and feminists most often reject the ideological message that Christian television programs communicate to their largely white, working-class audiences, such programs as *The 700 Club* and the *Jimmy Swaggart* show can teach progressives something about using the medium effectively. In "Why Christian Television Is Good TV," Julia Lesage analyzes both Christian TV's ideology—the homophobia and racism that are its deep structuring principles—and its tactics of persuasion.

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To the editor:

The apparently unending ineptitude of the Learning Channel's legal dealings with producers ["Rights and Wrongs: Learning Channel Contracts," January/February 1987] is only the tip of an iceberg. As one of the supposed 700,000 subscribers to TLC, and as an independent with a tape turned down for *The Independents: Ordinary People* series, let me tell you some of what came next. In the end, I was not unhappy to have been rejected.

The first problem is that TLC is a totally inappropriate setting for this series. Its usual fare is how-to shows on southern cooking, coin collecting, dress-making, how to play bridge... programming so utterly routine that it is not even listed in my Cablevision program guide, never mind the newspapers.

As no one would find it by chance, I watched for the publicity for *Ordinary People*. And I found nothing in either the Boston or New York papers. A major effort was about to debut, with significant money backing it, and no story, no program listing, no announcement, not even in the *New York Times* Sunday section on cable. The Cablevision guide didn't print a word. I did get a postcard from a friend whose film was going to be included in the series. But even she couldn't say when that would be. "Check your local listing," her card said. Ha.

Did TLC do any publicity? I got hold of their press kit. They'd put some effort into it—a big folder with a page and a photo on each of the 12 hours. But all of it was boiler-plate stuff, badly written and full of typos, guaranteed not to excite an editor. I also learned that their press conferences had come only a few days before the series aired, much too late for anyone to do the work justice.

Then what went on cable? In Boston, for the first several shows it was a picture full of noise and black specks, accompanied by nearly unintelligible sound. Somehow this struck me as the ultimate insult. After the first six or seven shows, TLC's evening programming disappeared altogether, along with *The Independents*. I called Cablevision, and they said I should call TLC. But TLC said it was the decision of the cable company. TLC put me in touch with its Northeast salesman, and I learned that he didn't even know that Cablevision had been carrying the evening schedule, or *The Independents*, at all.

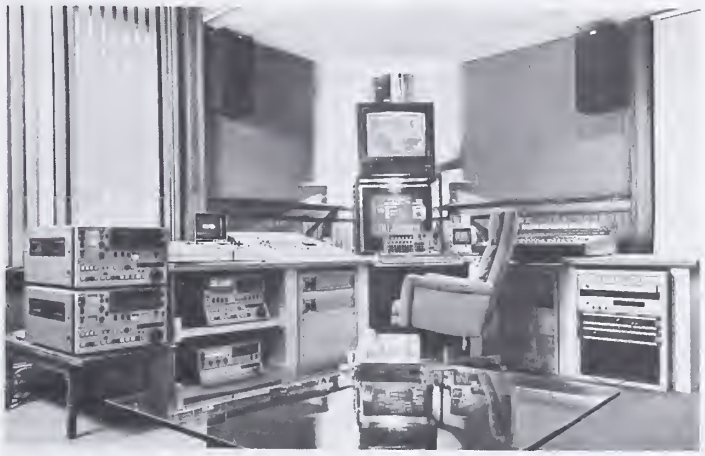
It is clear that, whatever the merits of *The Independents*, the MacArthur Foundation will get next to nothing for its money unless it addresses the limits and inappropriateness of the Learning Channel and its audience. A major restructuring of the whole effort is required, not just fixing the contract.

—Jack Churchill
Brookline, MA



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CONGRESS AND THE FCC DECIDE THE FATE OF THE FAIRNESS DOCTRINE

The fairness doctrine, one of the mainstays of broadcasting regulations devised to ensure the coverage of controversial issues and contrasting viewpoints in broadcast media, has evolved through interpretations of public interest requirements in communications law but has never been directly spelled out in any statute. Now, 37 years after it was first applied, the U.S. Congress is considering legislation intended to dispell questions concerning the limits and legality of the fairness doctrine. The primary motivation for these efforts comes from repeated attempts in recent years by the Federal Communication Commission, the agency created to regulate the broadcasting industry, to repeal fairness doctrine requirements.

Senate Commerce Committee chair Ernest Hollings (D-South Carolina) has been the major player in drafting a bill to codify the fairness doctrine. This March he convened hearings to gather ammunition for an anticipated battle with some broadcasters and FCC deregulators who oppose the measure. In his testimony before the committee outgoing FCC chair Mark Fowler confirmed his position that the doctrine should be rescinded—but with diminished prospects for seeing his views put into action.

Only a short time ago, before the Democrats won control of the Senate, the fate of the fairness doctrine seemed sealed. Consistent with its philosophy of broadcast industry deregulation, the Reagan-appointed FCC issued a 111-page report in August 1985 declaring the doctrine constitutionally "suspect." In that report they argued that the proliferation of broadcast stations in recent years "makes unnecessary any governmentally imposed obligation to balance coverage of controversial issues of public importance." In contrast to circumstances in 1949, when the doctrine was first promulgated and limited spectrum space meant broadcasters constituted public trustees responsible to the public, the commission argued that such accountability is no longer necessary.

Backed by a number of broadcasting groups, such as the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) and the Radio-Television News Directors Association (RTNDA), the FCC won a decisive victory in their efforts to nullify the doctrine last September when a three-judge federal appeals court considering a case on teletext regulation voted two-to-one that the FCC can, if it wishes, repeal the doctrine. Other recent court cases involving the fairness doctrine's legal standing and enforcement include *Meredith Corporation* (owners of WTVH-TV in Syracuse, New York) *vs. FCC*, which a U.S. court of appeals sent back to a lower court pending an FCC rulemaking on the constitutionality of the doctrine. The RTNDA also brought actions against the FCC, based on the trade association's contention that the commission is acting in an unconstitutional manner by failing to repeal the doctrine after finding it irrelevant to the "public interest." Needless to say, the current commission is in sympathy with this challenge. Nevertheless, in 1969 the Supreme Court upheld the doctrine as constitutional in the *Red Lion* case.

Other longstanding critics of the doctrine range from NBC and CBS to the Society of Professional Journalists, who complain that it compels broadcasters to avoid covering controversial issues and encourages blandness, since they may curtail controversial programming to prevent demands for air time. Again, the FCC's report concurs. The broadcast interests argue further that the doctrine violates the First Amendment by allowing a government agency to regulate broadcasters' freedom of speech.

Those arguing in favor of the doctrine—groups like the Media Access Project, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Democratic National Committee, and Accuracy in Media—maintain that it assures democratic treatment of public affairs issues. One prominent doctrine defender, former FCC chair Newton Minow, has maintained that the mere existence of more channels does not guarantee that varying points of view will be heard or that the demand for access to frequencies has diminished. In an oped article in the *New York Times*, Minow wrote that the proper tests for spectrum scarcity is not determined by the number of channels available but by the number of people who want licenses for those channels.

The burden of complying with the doctrine is arguably less stringent than those urging its repeal might assert. Broadcasters are not required to present opposing views in specific ratios of time (the fairness doctrine should not be confused with the equal time requirement granted political candidates), nor does the doctrine specify whether contrasting or contradictory viewpoints be aired during primetime or nonprimetime hours. The coverage accorded under the doctrine can be decided by the broadcast entity: they do not have to present another interpretation of a controversial subject in the same show, same day, or even the same type of program. Broadcasters can chose how, when, and who will offer the contrasting viewpoint. Furthermore, FCC fairness doctrine decisions examine *overall* programming by a station to determine whether or not an issue has been represented. In fact, 99 percent of the complaints filed against broadcasters under the doctrine are eventually rejected by the FCC as without merit. Of the one percent that are considered, only 15 percent have resulted in FCC action. While it does not police broadcast entities, the doctrine serves as a reminder to broadcasters of their responsibilities as public trustees. Rather than hindering broadcasting, "The public trusteeship principle... enhances the broadcasters' integrity nationwide [and] the Fairness Doctrine, as one aspect of the principle, has added significantly to the institutional credibility of broadcasting," stated the Fisher Broadcasting Company, a proponent of the doctrine.

The FCC has said that it would faithfully enforce the fairness doctrine if Congress so requires. Quoted in the *Wall Street Journal*, FCC general counsel Diane Killory said, "The Commission isn't going to attack something in our statutes as unconstitutional, as long as [the doctrine] is considered statutory." Prior to the recent congressional initiatives to enact a clear-cut mandate for FCC enforcement of the doctrine, the commission issued a list of alternatives: considering fairness complaints only at the time of license renewal, permitting broadcasters to rely on contrasting viewpoints presented on other local stations, and replacing the doctrine with an access requirement for opposing views.

But Hollings and his colleagues seem ready to go a different route. The majority on the Senate Commerce Committee support Hollings' bill, and its most vocal opponent, former Commerce Committee chair Bob Packwood (R-Oregon) has said that he will not filibuster the bill when it reaches the Senate floor. On the House side, Representative John Dingell (D-Michigan), chair of the Energy and Commerce Committee, plans to introduce a similar measure soon. While legislation cannot forestall an ultimate Supreme Court challenge to the fairness doctrine, explicit congressional support for the principle, combined with the renewed attention to the "public interest" requirements of broadcasting law that the debate has produced, portend a shift away from the marketplace ethic that the FCC under Fowler—and Reagan—has pursued so avidly.

QUYNH THAI

BORO TO BORO

Teleconferencing is no longer the sole province of corporate biggies, nor does it have to be a multidirectional bore. In February the Bronx Council on the Arts launched a pilot program called Soul to Soul, a public access teleconferencing network linking three New York City boroughs. The network is designed as a vehicle for cross-cultural, educational, and artistic exchange sent via microwave. Direct live communications will be possible from each teleconferencing center, which are all located at public school television facilities: the District 6 television studio in the Washington Heights section of upper Manhattan, the District 12 television studio in the South Bronx, and the Brooklyn Tech studio in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn.

Soul to Soul is the brainchild of project director Meryl Bronstein, an independent filmand videomaker. She was able to garner considerable in-kind services and equipment to get the network off the ground, including $50,000 plus in microwave equipment donated by the telecommunications hardware company M/A COM, valuable space for a central relay point provided by Citicorp, and equipment installation from Local Union 3 of Group W Cable.

The ongoing schedule provides for regular community affairs forums, performance and music programs, as well as video art and art experiments. So far this spring, Soul to Soul has featured programs as diverse as *The Four Elements*, a multimedia interchange by Gargoyle Mechanique and Erotic Psyche, a *Forum on Homelessness*, sponsored by the Homeless Union, and a video artist exchange facilitated by Alan Moore. For more information on the network, contact Meryl Bronstein, Bronx Council on the Arts, 1738 Hone Ave., Bronx, NY 10461; (212) 931-9500.

RENEE TAJIMA

SEQUELS

The **study of the content of public affairs programs on PBS**, first proposed in the spring of 1986 by then CPB director Richard Brookhiser ["Board in Flames: Conservatives Take Control at CPB," January/February 1987, and "Sequels," April 1987] was officially abandoned by the CPB board when it met in Seattle last March. A report of the board's Mission and Goals Committee recommended that CPB "forgo any further pursuit of using social science research to evaluate objectivity and balance in CPB funded programming," while instructing the corporation to monitor the results of a parallel study being conducted by a special PBS committee on programming policies and procedures ["On PBS Public Affairs Policies and Procedures: An Independent View," April 1987]. The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers was among the groups and individuals protesting the content analysis project and its possible censorious consequences.

□

The **British Broadcasting Corporation** stayed within its ranks to chose a successor for Alasdair Milne, who resigned as director general amidst considerable controversy earlier this year ["The Secret Society in Action: BBC Raid," April 1987]. Number two man at the BBC, Michael Checkland, has been appointed for a five-year term.

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GOING DUTCH: THE INTERNATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL



There was no paucity of lesbian films at the Amsterdam International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, where *Mädchen in Uniform* was screened along with the rare Mexican version, *Muchachas en Uniforme*.

Andrea Weiss

In recent years, gay film festivals have caught hold with a firm grip, providing lesbians and gay men with opportunities to see otherwise rarely screened work with homosexual themes and imagery. New York, San Francisco, Chicago, and Los Angeles are only some of the U.S. cities that host annual gay film events (often including video). While the institutionalization of these festivals can be attributed to the relative wealth of gay men (both as active movie-goers with plentiful disposable income and as owners of businesses whose financial contributions are paramount)—compared to the relative poverty of women and minorities—the overwhelming success of gay film festivals is partially dependent upon the particular, intricate relationship that gay men and lesbians have to what appears on the screen.

This relationship has been articulated in *Gays and Film*, edited by Richard Dyer (London: British Film Institute, 1980, revised 1984), in which gay cinema was first and most clearly defined in terms that go beyond simple depictions of gay characters, considering factors such as a gay sensibility functioning as part of the creative process at work in the production and/or interpretation of films (argued and elaborated in Jack Babuscio's essay "Camp and the Gay Sensibility"). This book hasn't been widely available in the United States, although Dyer *et al.* established the foundation for most subsequent analyses of gay film culture.

The three lengthy essays by Dyer, Babuscio, and Caroline Sheldon that comprise *Gays and Film* suggest that the specific relationship of gay audiences to cinema can be characterized in part by an intense identification with certain Hollywood stars. For lesbians these have often been the larger-than-life women who are beautiful, strong, and sexually ambiguous: Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo, and Katherine Hepburn, for example. Traditionally, gay men have identified with the mock naïveté of Judy Garland or the theatricality of Mae West, Bette Davis, and Tallulah Bankhead. Their self-conscious parodies of rigid heterosexual Hollywood norms is the stuff of "camp," characteristic of certain aspects of gay culture. And the appeal of cinema as an escape from the conditions of isolation and internalized self-hatred that historically have plagued gay people has further intensified the importance of the silver screen in their lives.

Risking gross generalization, I'd venture that European filmmakers and critics understand these phenomena far better than their U.S. counterparts, a surmise confirmed by my experience at the International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival in Amsterdam last December, which occupied three theaters for 15 days (followed by a tour of 25 other Dutch cities). The festival featured films from North and South America, Asia, and North Africa, made during every decade from the thirties to the eighties. They were supplemented by continuous video screenings, several photography exhibits, informal discussions with filmmakers after the screenings, and a number of panel discussions and prepared lectures on such subjects as lesbian romance narratives, the media representation of AIDS, American underground cinema, and lesbian pornography. Many filmmakers, critics, and theorists attended, among them Jaime Umberto Hermosilla (*Donna Erlinda and Her Sons*), Donna Deitch (*Desert Hearts*), Vitto Russo (*The Celluloid Closet*), Wieland Speck (*Westler*), Greta Schiller (*Before Stonewall*), and Mark Finch (British Film Institute). Many new films premiered and many recent but rarely seen films were given an encore. The coordination of the festival with the fortieth anniversary


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Kenneth Anger's *Scorpio Rising* was one stop on Richard Dyer's gay tour of the American underground cinema: his lecture at the Amsterdam festival.

Courtesy Mystic Fire Video

celebration of the Dutch gay liberation organization NVIH—COC (Nederlandse Vereniging Tot Integratie Van Homoseksualiteit COC), the oldest such group in the world, added to the historical perspective that informed festival selections of such films as *Anna und Elisabeth* (Germany, 1933), *Les Enfants Terribles* (France, 1949), *Suddenly Last Summer* (U.S., 1959), *I Could Go On Singing* (England, 1963), and *Rainha Diaba* (Brazil, 1974), among others.

The strong program of films of particular interest to women can be credited to the participation of Cinemien, a feminist distribution company in Amsterdam that is unequalled in size or scope anywhere else in the world, as well as to the painstaking efforts of film critic Annette Förster, who with Paul Verstraeten coordinated the festival. Cinemien assisted in searches for obscure films, provided prints of new acquisitions in their collection, subtitled work, and coordinated theatrical runs with festival premieres. The dearth of lesbian films common to U.S. gay film festivals can no longer be blamed on an absence of work: the Amsterdam festival featured a substantial selection of both independent films and studio productions rarely screened in this country, such as *Club des Femmes* (France, 1933), *Les Stances à Sophie* (France, 1970), *Another Way* (Hungry, 1984), *Fascination*, by Irene Stage (Denmark, 1984), and the work of German directors Ulrike Ottinger, Elfi Mikesch, and Silke Grossman. Even *Mädchen in Uniform* (Germany, 1931) was shown, along with the 1958 remake and the Mexican version, *Muchachas en Uniforme* (1950).

As this partial list indicates, the festival chose works that not only present gay characters, but also those carrying particular meanings or suggesting interpretations specific to gay audiences. *Anna und Elisabeth*, for instance, has no lesbian characters, but concerns a wealthy woman confined to a wheelchair who becomes healed through her belief in the spiritual powers of a peasant girl. However, the intensity of the relationship between healer and healed is heightened by the use of close-up shots of the two women's faces in physical proximity, to the exclusion of all else within the frame. For contemporary lesbian viewers these images can be read as erotic, but the exaggerated, unnatural, or even demonic quality of the film can also be appreciated as "camp." The inclusion of this film in a gay and lesbian film festival enlarges the scope of gay cinema and contributes to an understanding of the ways gay film spectators create meaning.

This type of interpretation of films that have special resonance for gay audiences necessarily includes the reevaluation of previously discredited Hollywood tragedies—the ones that end in suicide, heterosexual resolutions and other forms of denial—to retrieve the rare, poignant moments of sensuality these movies offer. And this analytic position challenges the more narrow emphasis on homosexual stereotypes and roles and possibilities for identification with gay characters. The conflict or disparity between these two critical approaches—the continental divide between European and U.S. gay criticism noted earlier—produced a palpable, if unspoken tension in discussions at the festival.

This theoretical disparity and the unfortunate decision to simultaneously schedule films appealing to women and to men—resulting in audiences segregated according to gender—were, however, the only causes for disappointment in Amsterdam. For the many video- and filmmakers present, the opportunity to meet and discuss work encouraged a genial and productive climate. Even when Monika Treut, codirector with Elfi Mikesch of *Seduction: The Cruel Woman,* risked controversy in her presentation of lesbian pornography, the opposition she encountered from anti-porn feminists at the Edinburgh Festival in 1985 and the New York Gay Film Festival in 1986 wasn't replayed. In Amsterdam, the dialogue (conducted in just about everyone's second language) was more nuanced and sophisticated, since the Dutch women that packed the room were more interested in constructing alternatives than hurling bricks. They called for a

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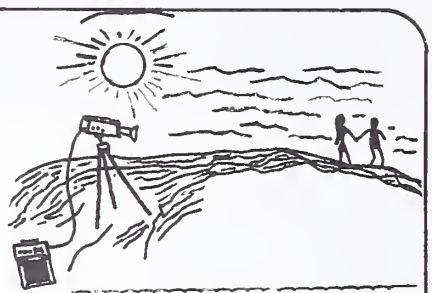
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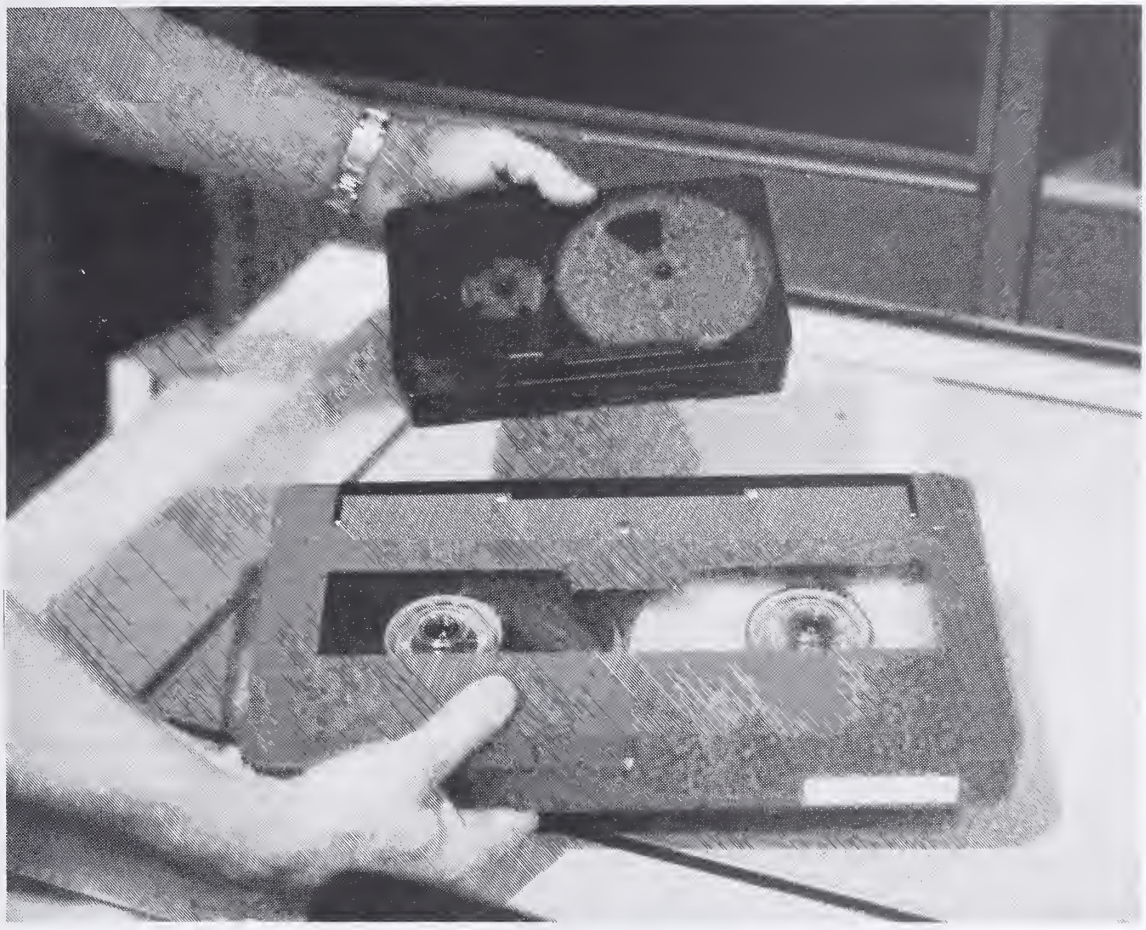
critique of the function of lesbianism in mainstream pornography, insofar as it is used to control and define women's sexuality, while demanding more and better lesbian porn that would elaborate fantasies that speak to lesbian viewers.

Richard Dyer's presentation on the American underground cinema offered a gay tour through the films of Kenneth Anger, Jack Smith, Barbara Hammer, Andy Warhol, and others. As a historical and theoretical framework, he established relationships of U.S. underground cinema in the fifties to the Beat poets and, in the sixties, to the literature of urban street culture—the work of writers such as James Baldwin and John Rechy. According to Dyer, the Beats appropriated aspects of the growing gay bar culture in their literature of revolt. And many underground films of the fifties utilized images of camp and machismo associated with the gay subculture and, through the influence of Beat poetry, questioned and rejected fixed gender conventions. In the underground cinema of the sixties, homosexuality became less of a departure from, and more a metaphor for, U.S. culture and the breakdown of social codes. In this talk, Dyer presented research from his forthcoming book, which, he explained, examines underground gay films of the period—both avant-garde art cinema and pornography.

The Amsterdam festival served a number of needs in the lesbian and gay media-making community: a reconsideration of films that have contributed to shaping the gay subculture and the identities of many gay people; a chance to see these films in a context that emphasizes gay sensibilities at work and to see new work produced by lesbian and gay video- and filmmakers that addresses gay experience and gay audiences; an environment that is not voyeuristic, where some common ground exists, and finally, an opportunity to establish an international community that is often difficult to attain when one is working independently. The Amsterdam festival began to satisfy these needs, which is no small accomplishment.

Andrea Weiss is an independent filmmaker living in New York. Her latest work is the documentary International Sweethearts of Rhythm.

DAYS OF MIRACLE AND WONDER: VIDEO TRENDS AT SMPTE '86



The shape of things to come at SMPTE '86: a 3/4" U-matic dwarfed by a new 19mm format D-1 digital cassette.

Photo: David Leitner

David Leitner

For the merging film and video industries, there are two annual equipment trade shows that matter. Each spring the National Association of Broadcasters, a trade association, meets for a splashy week-long showcase of press releases, prototype unveilings, and new products. Glitz reigns and rumors fly: conventioneers return to their desks the following week fired-up with hot industry gossip.

In the fall the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, an engineering society that recommends standards, mounts an equipment exhibition coupled with a technical conference. Production models of items shown as prototypes at NAB are announced, as well as innovations in film technology. At technical sessions inventors from around the world deliver papers detailing what's to come. Standards committees meet and debate, refining older technical specifications and defining new ones for nascent technologies like film timecode, digital video, and High Definition Television (HDTV). Where NAB is a weathervane indicating momentary shifts in technology, SMPTE can be a weather satellite photographing continents and storm systems. Last October's SMPTE provided a particularly insightful overview of controversies shaping trends in both the industry and technology.

Industry trends occupied SMPTE Engineering vice president Richard Streeter's opening remarks, "Is Standardization Obsolete?" Streeter asserted that the cost of standardization for manufacturers is not as high as the ultimate cost of making equipment that does not conform to a common, agreed upon standard. But, without a trace of irony, he then asked, "Is the pioneering done?" Evoking the spirit of Ray Dolby and the young, spirited design team that invented the videotape recorder at Ampex 30 years ago, Streeter expressed a fear that technological adventure on the high seas is a thing of the past, that things technological have grown too pat, too corporately determined. He noted that as broadcast technology has begun to mature, the number and nature of broadcast equipment manufacturers has declined. Some, like venerable RCA, have thrown in the towel to foreign competition; others, like Bosch and Ampex, have relinquished industry leadership and licensed the technology of others, creating de facto marketplace standardization.

On this ambivalent note Streeter handed the baton to Mark Sanders, Marketing and New Technology vice president at Ampex, who responded by challenging the industry to reinvent itself. With an élan reminiscent of the sixties, Sanders told the gathering of industry movers and shakers that innovators must be *wanted* in spite of being "unorthodox, undisciplined mavericks." Citing a recent study, he said that "80 percent of today's industry will undergo major change by the year 2000," and that those who do not follow the path of constant change are condemned to be followers "always playing catch-up." Successful firms, therefore,

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are more likely those that "accommodate and nurture those mavericks." Sanders, like Streeter, called on SMPTE attendees to celebrate inventiveness as a form of pioneering and to embrace its expression in design and manufacturing.

If industrial trends at SMPTE '86 bred uncertainty, technological trends were clear and unmistakable. These times of lasers in the jungle have produced camcorders in the palm of a hand, not to mention digital TVs, VCRs, Walkmans, watches, calculators, microwaves, personal computers, and telephone answering machines. The remarkable vitality of consumer electronics has spilled over into professional audio, video, and film: everything is smaller, lighter, more personal, less consumptive of power, more ergonomic, and more intelligent—i.e., digital and microprocessor-controlled. A particularly apt symbol of the consumerization of professional video technology is the paperback dictionary-sized consumer camcorder with its wee solid-state CCD camera and 8mm videotape recorder. Though not "professional," it neatly sums up the technical trends significant at SMPTE '86.

□

Trend number one is an emphatic shift from analog recording to digital. Consumer 8mm video, for instance, provides two digital stereo audio tracks.

Trend number two is the shift away from conventional medium-density iron oxide magnetic tape coatings to a new generation of high-density coatings that can absorb larger signals. High density video and audiotape formulations include metal particle, metal evaporated, small particle oxide, and barrium ferrite. The 8mm camcorder, for instance, requires metal particle tape. Accompanying this trend is the development of thinner tape for longer running times and faster head-to-tape speeds. The new 19mm professional digital videotape format D-1 employs a tape with a polyester base 13 microns thick, about 1/100th the thickness of this paper.

Trend number three is smaller, lighter, cassette-based formats that exploit narrower track widths, shorter wavelength recording techniques, and electronics at the expense of mechanics. The consumer 8mm camcorder embodies these design principles as does the cassette-based 19mm D-1 digital format, which will someday replace reel-to-reel Type-C 1-inch. Regarding electronics supplanting mechanics, Ampex v.p. Sanders hinted that Ampex was developing a technique to electronically scan the magnetic tracks on videotape, which would make mechanical heads unnecessary.

Trend number four is the reliance on Very Large Scale Intregrated circuit techniques to shrink entire boards of electronic components into thumbnail-sized microchips. The compactness of the consumer 8mm camcorder couldn't be achieved otherwise. The increased

use of VLSI in professional equipment is paving the way for various digital technologies to be built for less than their analog counterparts.

These four trends in technology—digital recording, high density tape coatings, small cassette formats, and VSLI to shrink equipment size—dominated SMPTE '86, figuring prominently in technical papers and in the aisles of the equipment exhibition. Perhaps nowhere were these trends more pronounced yet so entangled in issues of standardization and industry cooperation than in the area of video formats. What follows, then, is a SMPTE '86 update on that particular confluence of industry and technology.

□

Small Video Formats. 1/4-inch ENG has floundered. Bosch has withdrawn Quartercam from NTSC markets, leaving its commitment to the PAL version in question. At the same time Bosch has joined the 1/2-inch Betacam bandwagon and will now manufacture for the U.S. market under license from Sony. (By the way, Bosch isn't Bosch anymore. The German Bosch and the Dutch company Philips have merged their broadcast divisions into a new company, Broadcast Television Systems or BTS, though they will maintain their individual identities until NAB '87.) Professional ENG versions of 8mm also seem to be on hold at the moment, although SMPTE has formed a Small Format (8mm) Study Group. Notably, the only 8mm video gear at SMPTE '86 was Kodak's, which, with its systems approach and modular design—separate camera, recorder/player, and stereo tuner/timer—qualifies as semi-professional.

Professional high-speed 1/2-inch. Although Sony's Betacam SP and Panasonic's M-II had been announced at the 1986 NAB in Dallas, the competition reached full heat in the fall. At SMPTE '86 Sony formally introduced the Betacam SP, calling it a "format extension" of the original Betacam introduced in 1981 and promising production models by NAB '87. In brief, the SP camcorder uses new metal particle tape to achieve a signal that, for the first time, truly matches and in some respects surpasses Type-C 1-inch. Per a Sony rep, the new tape will cost two to three times as much as the current product. Important to Sony's marketing strategy is the fact that Betacam SP equipment is compatible with some 28,000 Betacam units already in the field: old machines will play the new metal tape.

Matsushita, for its part, got serious about the flagging fortunes of its M-format Recam camcorder by forming a new division, Panasonic Broadcast Systems, and revamping the format as M-II. Like Betacam SP, M-II avails itself of metal particle tape, but unlike Betacam SP it is *not* compatible with its predecessor, the original M-format. Chrominance recording has been changed from frequency multiplexing to time-compressed multiplexing à la Betacam, and the increased signal bandwidth

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matches Betacam SP. (Dig another hole in the format graveyard.) M-II's superior performance was demonstrated at SMPTE '86 by means of a sixth-generation dub that revealed little sign of degradation.

Both new 1/2-inch formats feature two new audio tracks in addition to the current two tracks. The two new tracks are not digital, but they are recorded as FM by helically-spinning heads adjacent to the video heads. As a result, M-II achieves an 80 db signal-to-noise ratio, while Betacam SP achieves 85 db. (Digital audio recording boasts 90 db.) Unfortunately, however, these new audio tracks can't be edited separately from the video—a major disappointment. Also, both new 1/2-inch formats offer two cassette sizes for increased recording time. Betacam SP provides a 30-minute cassette for field use and a larger 90-minute cassette for studio purposes. The larger cassette is not intended for the camcorder and will not fit. M-II, which has a considerably slower tape speed than Betacam SP, 2.67 inches/sec. vs. 4.67 ips, surprisingly offers only a 20-minute field cassette instead of 30- and a 90-minute studio cassette.

Panasonic seems to have seized the market initiative with a field-ready M-II product line that includes a camcorder (with an Ikegami HL-95 camera front), field recorder/player (no time-base corrector), field editing system, and studio recorder/player. NBC spent $3.25-million on M-II gear by the end of 1986 and, despite rumors of kinks, is by all accounts infatuated with the equipment. NBC plans to purchase more M-II, phase out all 3/4-inch gear at its four owned and operated stations by the end of 1987, and completely convert the network sports operation to M-II by early 1988 for the Olympics in Seoul. An NBC vice president even went so far as to predict that all program suppliers would be required to submit on M-II by the 1987 fall season, and that the days of buying 1-inch machines were over at NBC. JVC, incidentally, is part-owned by Matsushita and will be a second supplier of M-II equipment.

Where does that leave Betacam SP? In the second quarter of 1987 shipments are expected to news crews at Boston's WNEV, who will field test the first SPs in the U.S. A Sony rep at SMPTE said production camcorders, field recorder/players, studio recorder/players and studio editing systems would be available by the third quarter. BTS (Bosch), Ampex, and Thomson will also manufacture Betacam SP equipment under license from Sony.

3/4-inch U-matic. This greying format will survive a while longer if Sony's improved "SP" catches on. The upgraded 3/4-inch SP format features across the board improvements in audio and video signals, due mainly to the implementation of metal tape. Also, a gain of 20 db S/N in one of the weakest areas of 3/4-inch—sound—has been achieved by adding Dolby C noise reduction. Speaking of sound, Sony added non-standard digital sound capabilities to 1-inch

Type-C with the introduction of its BVH-2800 series VTR.

19mm Component Digital. Certainly the most significant debut at SMPTE '86 was the unveiling by Sony of its beautifully designed DVR-1000 Digital-VTR and DVPC-1000 Digital Signal Processor, the first commercial units to utilize the world-standard SMPTE/ EBU (European Broadcasting Union) 19mm D-1 component digital format. The DVR-1000 Digital-VTR resembles a 3/4-inch studio recorder with a colossal horizontal cassette slot. This is a tape transport that, in its SMPTE '86 configuration, sits atop the air conditioner-sized DVPC-1000, which handles signal processing. The DVR-1000 control panel features an orange gas plasma display that indicates functions via icons and "soft" buttons that can be programmed to control various functions.

The DVR-1000 Digital-VTR and DVPC-1000 Signal Processor break ground everywhere. There is no generational signal loss and no need for the conventions of color framing and time-base correction—the Signal Processor, in effect, *is* a time-base corrector. There are *four* digital audio tracks that record a bandwidth from 20Hz to 20KHz (the full range of human hearing) at 16 bits/sample in the "standard" mode and 20 bits/sample in "hi-fi." In shuttle mode, a distinct picture is possible up to 40 times normal speed, although at that speed it has a weirdly beautiful, pointillistic texture. A singularly impressive achievement, perhaps vital to the success of the D-1 format itself: the DVR-1000 Digital-VTR records all TV standards equally. There is no NTSC, PAL, and SECAM version.

The D-1 format uses cassettes for maximum protection against operator error. They come in three running times, 34-minute, 76-minute, and 96-minute, and two physical sizes, the smaller six by ten-inch and the larger eight by 14.5-inch. Since the tape width is 19mm—virtually the same as 3/4-inch—the cassettes are approximately the same thickness as 3/4-inch cassettes. The tape formulation, however, is a special cobalt ferric oxide, and the polyester base is an incredible 16 microns thick for the 34- and 76-minute cassettes. Even more astonishing, the 96-minute cassette uses a tape that is 13 microns and contains a mile of tape! Such extended tape lengths are necessary due to the huge size of the digital signal, which also dictates a head-to-tape writing speed of 81 m.p.h. At SMPTE '86 only the 34- and 76-minute cassettes were shown, since the incredible 96-minute cassette is still under development.

HDTV. On the HDTV front, SMPTE '86 provided little of substance. There was a smattering of new HDTV equipment on hand—Ikegami showed their HDTV Telecine Camera, the TKC-1125 (Rank-Cintel debuted an inherently superior HDTV Flying Spot Telecine a year earlier at SMPTE '85)—but the ongoing political impasse hovered overhead like a dark cloud over HDTV's future.

This January, the NAB sponsored a field test in Washington, D.C., using CBS's WUSA broadcasting tower. They commandeered two channels and broadcast a huge HDTV signal to receiving sites a few miles away at NAB headquarters, the Federal Communications Commission, Capitol Hill, and a local department store. Congressional support was enlisted for the 1125-line/60 Hz (i.e., 60 fields/sec.) HDTV system that Sony and NHK (Japanese Broadcasting) have advocated for the past several years and which SMPTE has lately endorsed. But Congressional endorsement is not the problem.

For better or worse, last May in Geneva the CCIR (International Radio Consultative Committee), the paramount world standard-setting body in radio and television, which was instrumental in the adoption of the SMPTE/EBU 19mm D-1 standard, failed to vote on endorsing the Japanese 1125-line system as a world standard. The CCIR intentionally avoided a vote because the 1125-line system is not a product of consensus. Many European broadcasting authorities have objected to its key features. Since the CCIR convenes once every four years and will not vote again until 1990, this puts Japan, the U.S., and Canada in a bind. They can choose to go it alone with their own HDTV effort and thereby scuttle a once in a lifetime chance to create a world standard for HDTV or wait four years and, in the interim, incorporate the newer technology of the trends detailed above into a universal system. The Japanese, for one, have decided not to wait.

Last summer, in the wake of CCIR, the Dutch Philips, German Bosch, French Thomson, and English Thorn/EMI companies, plus assorted others from 19 European nations pooled $180-million and formed the Eureka Project, a crash program to create specifications for a 1250-line, 50 Hz (50 fields/sec.) HDTV system of their own by April 1987. Besides pride and the economic appeal of an all-European HDTV manufacturing process, their principle motivation is that they are convinced that production in a 1250-line/50 Hz HDTV format could be readily converted to conventional 50 Hz PAL or SECAM for broadcasting, and that the proposed 1125-line/60 Hz HDTV would not easily permit this. They have a point.

David W. Leitner is an independent producer/cinematographer and currently technical director of For All Mankind, *a 35mm feature that depicts a flight to the moon.*

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Why Christian Television Is Good TV

Julia Lesage

Editor's note: Julia Lesage and Trinh T. Minh-ha's articles in this issue continue a series of papers and transcribed talks delivered at ViewPoints: A Conference on Women, Culture, and Public Media *held at Hunter College in New York City on November 8 and 9, 1986 [see our January/ February 1987 and April 1987 issues]. This national conference was independently organized by a committee of women involved in film, video, and photography (including* The Independent *editor Martha Gever and associate editor Renee Tajima), cosponsored by Women Make Movies and Hunter College Women's Studies Department, and funded by the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York Council on the Humanities. Trinh's paper was delivered at the panel "Cracking the Media Mystique: Images and Politics," and Lesage's at "The Subject of Politics: Women and Right-Wing Media" panel.*

On the surface, the worst thing about Christian television seems to be its rigid anti-abortion stance and its institutional support for the political agenda of the New Right, especially for the *contras*. Many leftists and feminists label Christian television "right-wing" media and never watch it, or they do watch it and immediately reject it. However, an easy pejorative encourages intellectual laziness when it allows us to dislike a media phenomenon and not consider that phenomenon either respectfully or analytically.

Both when viewing and when writing about television, it is useful to carry on an interior monologue noting TV's class and gender aspects. There is an implied hierarchy of value among genres that corresponds to our social hierarchy. For example, women have been identified as the primary viewers of soap operas and daytime television; men as watchers of sports. However, in ordinary conversation "sports" does not bear the negative connotation that "the soap opera" or "the game show" frequently do. In class terms, the news and public television serve people who finished high school. CBN (the Christian Broadcasting Network) with *The 700 Club* show, and the PTL (Praise the Lord) broadcasting network with *The Jim and Tammy Bakker Show*, are the white, working-class networks.

Black Christian television, primarily black preaching and gospel singing, has a different relation to its regular viewers. Followers of national (white) religious broadcasting may see black evangelism as confirmation of the rightness of their shared Christian faith, or they may dismiss black Christian television as demagogic (Jesse Jackson), crassly opportunistic (Reverend Ike), or just old-fashioned. Catholic television broadcasting has not gotten beyond an abysmal talking heads format with clerics and authorities telling viewers what to think, and there are few Jewish shows. In addition, there are many local and regional Christian stations and shows, broadcast primarily on cable TV. Here I will analyze mostly the national cable networks, CBN and PTL, and mostly their weekday shows, but I'll talk a little bit about the weekend preachers and a little about the gospel and a little about Jerry Falwell, who seems to be losing power and stands in the periphery.

Christian evangelists, with wisdom accumulated from a populist preaching tradition, have a good sense of what audiences in a home environment expect and want from the medium of television. And a backward stand on reproductive rights or foreign policy are not the worst things about Christian television. Worse yet are the widespread ideological assumptions—in this case, the assent to compulsory heterosexuality and xenophobia— that conform to television discourse in general in the U.S.

A major task of ideology, on the unconscious level, is to signal and constantly define the traits of who is supposed to be the other and who is acceptable as one of us. The "us" targeted as a viewership for Christian TV is primarily white working-class. Thus, homophobia and racism are deep structuring principles in Christian television, only they are more visible to liberal middle-class viewers there than in the rest of the intellectual/communications apparatus. Intellectuals who like to watch the news may think that Christian broadcasting is the most acute locus of TV racism, if they notice how racist television is. Yet if we look at both the subject matter and the style of network news and then at Christian broadcasting, we would see the same kind of racism in each.



Jimmy Swaggart: "Back about six months ago God told me, 'Take the crusades to other countries that have little opportunity to hear—at least on a large scale—the gospel of Jesus Christ, and I will give you a move of God that few have seen.' We've done that."



"But when we did all this, our expenses went up about 30 or 35 percent. It had to be. We had to have all kinds of equipment for television. But God told me to do it. I don't have a choice.... You don't have a choice either. I'm pleading with you to say yes. You can't say no."

THE BRUTE TAMED

One of the major gratifications daytime Christian television offers is the melodramatic gratification, aimed at women in the home, which I call "the brute tamed." Everyday you can see men crying. They confess. They repent. They change. They become moral. They become family men. For many women, especially where the husband is spending his money on booze and going out with the boys, this vision of economic and familial sobriety is not only a pleasurable goal to imagine, its enactment would come about through the wife's moral force and would be an index of her social/personal control.

In fact, in a lot of Christian working-class families this kind of "moral unity" is the goal. A wife may say to her husband, "Now, you have to come to church on Sunday with me and the kids." What this means is, "You'll come to church with me and the kids on Sunday, and you'll hand me your paycheck, and the community will see that we're a family together." Many social and personal ideals cohere in this image. Seeing this scenario day after day offers the same kind of appeal, let's say, that the Women's Christian Temperance Union originally had in Chicago.

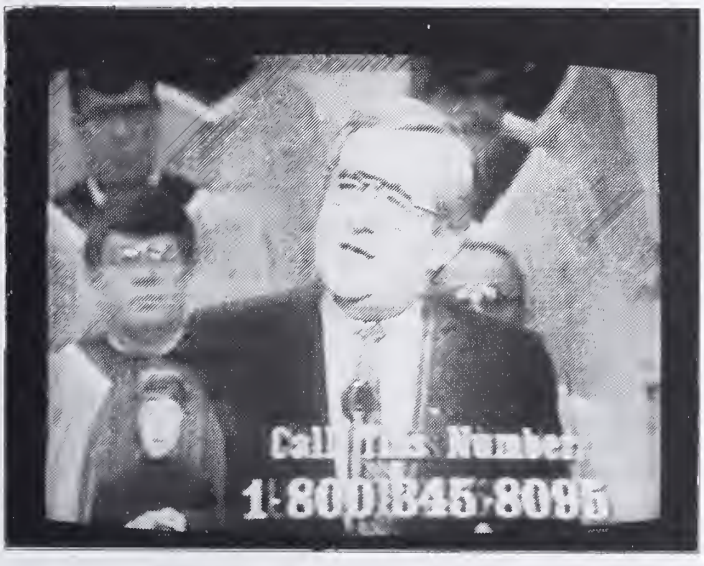
Often the black preachers are openly critical of family politics, recognizing how alcoholism and male philandering weaken the community. Here are the words of Dr. Frederick K. C. Price, who told the Sunday audience of *The Christian Family* this:

> Sometimes men just take and take and take all the time. You'll tip a valet and a waitress, but *she* does more for you. Buy her a little something and make it something nice.
>
> You guys always say, "I gotta have time alone, spend time with the boys. Now, honey, hush." You just want a cook and sex machine.
>
> You could go out at night with mutual consent between the two of you. Don't go out jawing and then leaving her three hours alone, or saying you're going out for an hour and then coming back three hours later. You know, if you come back with a blonde hair on your coat, and even if it just blew off onto your coat, that's gonna cause a lot of bad fantasies in your house.

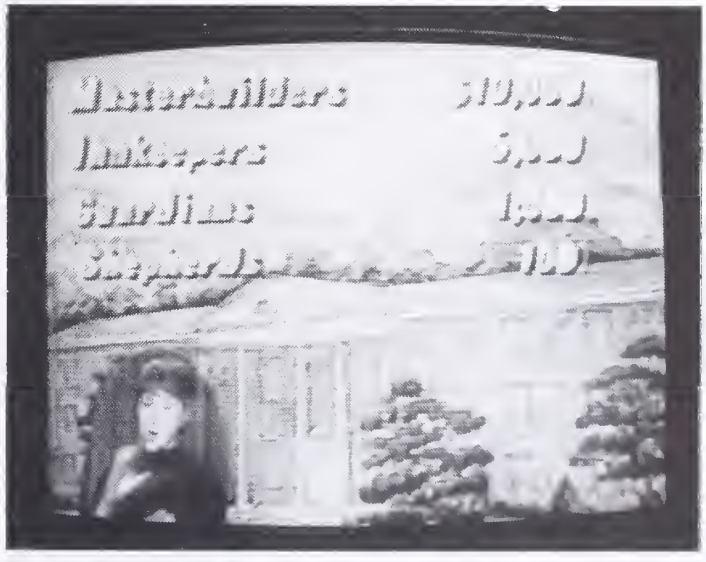
A very common family pattern in my neighborhood, often among Latino and black families, is that the men just go out at night. They say they're going for an hour and then come in at four or five in the morning, maybe drunk. They usually haven't gone out with women but out with the boys. And they expect food to be prepared for them whenever it is that they are at home. That particular family drama—or melodrama—doesn't appear on soap operas, which deal with upper middle-class problems such as going to see your lawyer or therapist or partner in adultery in rich settings and in some very dramatic way. In soap operas, a middle-class version of the above family pattern does appear. The man will call home to say he's working late at the office or meeting a client for dinner. Then the narrative presents an episode in which he has a prearranged tryst with his "woman on the side."

BODY LANGUAGE, SETS

To analyze Christian television we must deal with real class issues. In my case, it is painful for me as a feminist to admit the class bias that we have projected onto others, even if we tried to avoid such a bias in our political programs and intellectual work. In the early part of the women's movement, especially the white feminist movement, we failed to acknowledge that there were different dress codes among us. By not wearing a girdle and by dressing in slacks and a shirt, I project a specific class identity, as do most of the white women at the Viewpoints Conference—media-makers, critics, artists. We announce publicly that we are downwardly mobile, middle-class women, who can afford to dress in this very casual way. Most black women don't dress like this, nor do most trade union women, if they are gathering in public for a meeting. Many, if not most, women in the U.S. cherish a notion of dressing up in public or dressing up out of respect for other people. Blacks were forced to dress in rags during slavery; if lucky, perhaps they could dress in the masters' castoff finery for church services. They do not have a legacy of pride in dressing down. And if you look at the visual history of trade unions in the United States, photographs of strikes show the workers, both men and women, demonstating while wearing their best clothes.



Jerry Falwell issues his "New Emancipation Proclamation" during his sermon on the Sunday morning *Old Time Gospel Hour*. "Without a doubt, abortion is the slavery of the day in which we live. It's the issue that if we do not win it we do not deserve to survive."



Falwell unveils the plans for his proposed headquarters of a chain of Liberty Godparent Homes for unwed, pregnant women, to be built on the campus of Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia: "I'd like my friends at home watching my television, I'd like you to call this toll free number and say, 'Jerry, I'll be a masterbuilder. I'll pledge $10,000.'"

When we see women as moderators or in the audience on Christian television, their self-presentation conveys their adherence to the ideal of dressing up in public. Before the moderators appeared on television, these women went to the beauty shop. They had their hair put up in rollers and sat under the dryer and then had it combed out and styled. To go out to a public event, they wear nylons and low heels, not spikes, and they use coordinated costume jewelry, very often a string of fake pearls and big earrings. They wear makeup—base, powder, blusher, lipstick, and a little mascara. Usually they have on a tailored skirt with a feminine suit jacket and dressy blouse, but never slacks, and I always see evidence of a girdle. Obviously I have not adopted that mode of dress, even for political purposes. But I understand that I give off very specific signals about my class position, as does everyone else. Just by looking at us, most people would know immediately that we feminist media women, especially the white women, have chosen to do nonalienated labor and be downwardly mobile economically. We don't look like women who are working on Wall Street, for example, and we don't look like women who *have* to dress up for a job.

The uniform of jeans and a sweatshirt, worn by a woman over age 25 in public space, offers a statement to others. Other people "read" much about us visually. In fact, this standard dress code of the "feminist" is used as a pejorative icon on Christian television, where our image is often contrasted to the image of all other "normal" women. So even if we have very good reasons not to change our mode of dress, we should stop being naive about the image that we have always signalled—from the very inception of the feminist movement.

Personally, I learn something about my own upbringing and rebellions by analyzing how Christian television plays off the utopian aspects of working-class ideology, for example, the desire for respectability. To dress and act in an orderly way, to be personally neat and clean, and to have a house that is neat and clean signals to the community, "I am a respectable person. We are a respectable family." I rebelled against the stifling narrowness of seeing women's role primarily as the maintainer of the family members' and the furniture's "neatness." But I know, from my conflicts with my family, that physically and socially I publicly signalled my rebellion, and that all the visible indices of my rebellion made my mother very distressed.

On Christian television, many of the daytime programs have a living room set, and that set is usually furnished in classical, "old rich," good taste. It has more expensive furniture than any viewer could usually afford. The living room set evokes emotions associated with both Father and Mother. Only the riches a woman might get by virture of her father or husband's class status would allow her to have such a living room. Pat Robertson often uses such a place from which to speak to his public. In this sense, the set is patriarchal.

However, a living room still represents the home, mom's turf. And in this space "witnesses" tell how their faith in Jesus let them be delivered from acute personal suffering, especially vices that destroyed their capacity for personal love and family responsibility. The woman who was raped can tell how she hated the child who reminded her of the rapist and how she overdosed on tranquilizers. The former convict can tell how he saw his mother, a prostitute, take in clients. The set, now often with a woman interviewer, becomes the site of deeply personal "sharing."

Politicians in the U.S have always known to use such a set, often for a "fireside chat." This kind of image proclaims, "We're bringing public space into your living room, and we're going to interpret it in an orderly way, so you can absorb it and it will be palatable to you." The upper-middle-class living room set plays a central role in Christian television. With its utopian, patriarchal cultural legitimacy and its "motherly" emotional appeal, it provides a richly associative image and establishes emotionally a certain mental "path." On a political level, this constant set facilitates the New Right's ability to interpret the public sphere for its viewers. The emotional shaping of the message, more than any explicit political content, gives the right wing discourse presented by Christian television its ideological staying power. It is in this sense that I find Christian broadcasting "effective television," for it is so finely tuned to the emotions conveyed by its iconography.



CBN News economic correspondent Bruce Page reports: "The Democrats now control both houses of Congress for the first time during the Reagan administration, and they're determined to flex their political muscle. And this may be the issue to do it: raise taxes."

Within Christian television itself, there are class differences in the targeted audience. If Pat Robertson's *The 700 Club* seems aimed at the lower-middle-class or the craft union level of the working-class, Jim and Tammy Bakker present themselves and their "world" as by and for down-home folk. Jim and Tammy have built a Christian theme park called Heritage USA, and the first thing they put up there to conduct their ministry was a high-tech broadcasting facility. If you think of it from the perspective of a working-class family, the notion of going to a theme park for a Christian vacation isn't so bad. The adults and older teenagers would have the intellectual prestige of studying, even if only the Bible. The smaller kids would not plague their parents to buy a lot of junk. They wouldn't see excessive alcohol consumed either, which means a lot to families on vacation. And each night there would be large scale entertainment, such as a variety show.

Furthermore, if you go to the Christian theme park or if you go to any of the preachers and their big revivals—such as those of Jimmy Swaggart—you can gain not only the status of repenting but of getting on TV as you repent. People like being seen on TV, especially if they can gratify their superego and perform for the camera in the service of a higher moral cause (some forms of *jouissance*, or extreme pleasure, such as being on the winning side at a sports event or getting saved, are more morally acceptable than others and thus likely to be seen on television over and over again; others, such as coming, are relegated to the x-rated videocassette market).

Furthermore, at the revivals, viewers see a wide variety of faces, physiognomies, weights, and body types. The people attending a religious event dress up in public, but they still bear the traces of the whole variety of working-class people who are visually underrepresented on television. When working-class people watch soap operas, they see upper-middle-class characters. If white working-class viewers enjoy seeing their "own" on TV, they can do so constantly on Christian television.

POLLUTION AND PURIFICATION RITUALS

Christian television networks hold out to the white working-class a dream that they, via leaders such as Falwell and Robertson, have a class potential for action and power: "You people sitting in your living rooms, send me your widow's mite, and we'll convert it into political power." That's one of the hopes people have clung to in the Reagan era. Christian television particularly exploits women's isolation in the home and promises, "Send me your money, and I'll help you out right there with your problems at home." Again, as with Hitler's fascism, a regressive political platform can be built upon a utopian, working-class sensibility.

Such a utopian sensibility, which most of us would reject as disasterous in its consequences, can be analyzed in anthropological terms. Applying Mary Douglas' notions of pollution in *Purity and Danger*, it is useful to look first at our own utopian ideals. In other words, many of us dislike Reagan, dislike the fascism that we see around us, dislike urban pollution

and nuclear pollution. We interpret these things as a kind of pollution in our society, and we often even use the word "pollution." When we imagine our ideal revolutionary culture, we imagine our society rid of this, purified of that—e.g., society would be better if we could drink clean water and had clean air. In anthropological terms these goals which we assent to represent the larger social purification rituals of the feminist movement and the left. When Martin Luther King, Jr. proclaimed, "I have a dream," he evoked the purity of children's race-free consciousness as an ideal, and the general assent to that ideal gave the civil rights movement, and now more broadly what we would call the progressive movement, its cohesiveness.

Very different ideals of social purity and different wars on social pollution inform Christian television and give its audience political cohesiveness. On Christian television, the pollution is drugs, the breakdown of the family, AIDS and gayness. Even more than with its resolute opposition to abortion, the right maintains consensus about the evils of homosexuality. Christian television gives testimonials about "badness" over and over again. What motivates this dominant narrative strategy is the conviction that both society and individuals can go from pollution to purification. Then, because it is the Reagan era, Christians can found a new conservative social order. If we are honest, we would acknowledge that we too need such an emotional/social ritual. If I put into the category of "badness" fascism, Reagan, urban pollution, acid rain—i.e., put lots of things we don't like in there—then we could say we wanted our society to be purified of those things in the same way that the right wing wants to purify society of its list of bad things, and we would seek out cultural events that assured us of cultural cohesion around our goals.

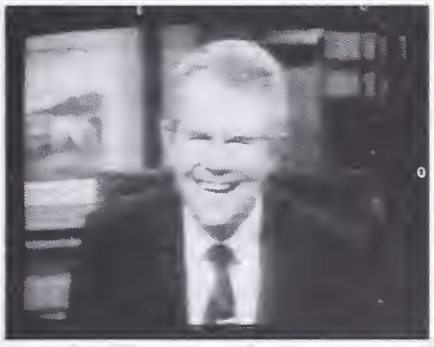
GENDER AND FAMILY ROLES

I'm fascinated by *The Jim and Tammy Bakker Show* and other offerings that can be seen on daytime Christian television, because daytime Christian television has its own vision of women's turf. Women-oriented fare here looks more working-class than, let's say, it does on the game show, which tantalizes viewers with expensive consumer items, or on soap operas, where the characters' adventures are enacted in an incredibly upper-middle-class environment. Daytime Christian television offers fashion shows, diet shows with health tips, even aerobics in modest dress. Furthermore, such television gives a specific pitch to anyone suffering from loneliness. For example, Oral Roberts asks elderly women to contribute their widow's mite as he makes them feel that they are also contributing to a community.

Television in general, indeed, all the mass media surrounding us—TV, advertising, and film—doesn't suffer gender role confusion, even in a film about the transvestite or the transsexual or the lesbian mother or the gay man with AIDS. Women and children will always appear with clearly defined feminine and childlike roles and so will doctors or cops with clearly defined masculine roles. These folk who face no gender role confusion in the narrative indicate that the rest of the world is comfortably ensconced in its role status, even if a story may deal with some topic that points to gender confusion. In Christian television, especially daytime television, women's gender roles are merely set out as given and reflect working-class notions of ideal femininity.

But daytime Christian television does set out to correct roles gone astray and it does so overtly. If gender roles can be taken for granted, family roles cannot. The family is in a mess, and in the Christian narrative (informing its nonfiction as well as fiction programs), family roles get straightened out over and over again. Of course, the soap opera also offers the narrative pleasure of straightening out family role confusion, but as Christian television acknowledges the breakdown of the family and ongoing family tensions, it also offers the reassuring pleasure of seeing either women as moral force or the Bible as moral force. In other words, it promises that there will be some force intervening to pull everyone back together.

The right shares a consensus about gayness as pollution. If we want to fight the right on gender issues, we have to speak out for an explicitly pro-homosexual position whenever the subject of AIDS is discussed. We



Pat Robertson editorializes: "The problem we're facing is that everybody wants a little something. Over 50 percent get something from the federal government. And that means that there's got to be a political will someplace in America to say, 'We'll give up a little of ours, if you give up a little of yours.'... You've got to say, 'All right, we believe that the strength of America is greater than my little problem.'... We've got to make it on our own in the private sector."

can't let this discussion slip into an easy homophobia. However, among politically conservative women, abortion is a disputed issue. It is not openly disputed ideologically, but whenever it comes up for a referendum, in the secrecy of the voting booth, people vote against such referenda. Abortion itself has not gone away, and we know that many women get abortions secretly for themselves and their daughters. Since the first right to go in the Reagan era was health care for poor women, free abortion disappeared as an active political issue, so the fight for reproductive rights must be joined to the fight for adequate health care under capitalism. We should keep that in mind very clearly when we see the constant diatribe against abortion on Christian television.

On the other hand the ERA is not a disputed issue, either on Christian television or among white working-class housewives. In October 1986, I was fascinated to see *The 700 Club*'s depiction of the ERA referendum coming up in Vermont. Many of the ERA supporters were shown to look like me—a heavy woman who wears slacks but no girdle. In iconographic terms, that was obviously intended to be an insulting image of a feminist. Other speakers in support of the ERA were shown as very young women (too young to lead) while the women fighting the ERA were middle-aged. These women wore suits and were nicely dressed by Christian TV standards. And the report used people-on-the-street interviews, which indicated, as always happens on *The 700 Club*, "We know there are other views out there." The interviews spoke for and against the ERA. But then we see a man interviewed about ERA who says, "I don't know." The male authority figure's voice comes back later in the program and indicates, "You just don't know what would happen if we passed ERA." The fear of *future* gender role confusion was enough to motivate voters to vote no.

RACISM

Television in the U.S. is even more racist than it is sexist. The blacks who get on television are tidy, de-ethnicized, and upwardly mobile, or they were formerly untidy and are now repentant, or they are just plain vicious and chaotic. The news presents most foreigners as vicious and chaotic—e.g., "illegal aliens."

The most fascinating black person on "white folks'" Christian television is the moderator on *The 700 Club*, Ben Kinchlow. Kinchlow wears suits that would put an executive in the *Fortune* top 100 to shame. Everyday he comes on with the most elaborate and expensive three-piece suit, with ties that must have cost $150 each. It's really fascinating, because we can always find this kind of figure emerging on television, a person fitting into the middle-class mold so easily who just happens to have a black skin. We saw this elsewhere when publishers just put black faces but not black culture in *Dick and Jane* readers in response to community protests about racism in grade school primers.

Christian television tries and convicts us on the level of imagery more

than on the level of argumentation. In this way, it uses the connotative aspects of imagery in a specifically "law and order" kind of way. *The 700 Club,* which often uses a news format, presents images of demonstrations, gay liberation, and youth that look like images we might use in our own media. Yet if a shot of two people of the same sex hugging is positive in our media, its very appearance on Christian television indicates "social chaos deriving from moral chaos." Similarly, various aspects of youth culture, often rock music lyrics, become examples of "satanism today."

Here we must add all the "feed the poor" images of Africa. Advocating "humanitarianism" cuts short the discussion of basic human rights, especially for black people, and it refuses an analysis of causes, especially when the cause of world hunger is imperialism. Humanitarianism will always treat the symptoms of "tragic suffering" but never effect a cure. Humanitarianism is an ideological construct that eases the consciences of the rich, but we do not always identify it in its various manifestations: e.g., the March of Dimes, Jerry's kids, Bob Geldof, EST's hunger project.

Beyond calling for humanitarian aid for starving Africans, the images of Africa and the "do good" message of the television missionaries hide the specific ties that many fundamentalist religious groups working in the third world have to the CIA. Not only do these groups receive material support from the U.S. government, but in the field they preach a "depoliticizing" religion. I saw this in Nicaragua where "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and render unto God what is God's" becomes just "Turn to God." There is an ideological battle within the religious rhetoric, for while liberation theology in the third world is preaching that the poor



Co-host Denuda Soderman and guests on the living room set for *The 700 Club*: "Still ahead, adopting children: the obstacles, hardships, and answers."

have a religious right and duty to live as whole people, the evangelist groups preach removing one's attention from earthly concerns.

At the same time that I denounce these groups' ties to U.S. foreign policy interests, I also must point out that they have had television shows playing in many areas throughout the world for years, and have thought out many issues involved in creating effective cross-cultural media. For example, Jimmy Swaggart preaches around the world, and his show often comes to us from a stadium in South America filled with thousands of people. He is a fine actor and puts on a great show. He preaches damnation and gives a colorful picture of the world's evils, he builds up a sweat and loosens his tie, and then he prays as God's grace gently falls upon the repentant. Most important, when he preaches in South America, he always has a Spanish-speaking preacher on stage doing simultaneous translation, and that preacher is *as good an actor as he is.*

Such respect for both performance and linguistic compentency should teach those of us who do solidarity media in the U.S. a lesson. Consider all the voiceovers you have heard in solidarity films and all the slide shows you've gone to where someone tells you in their own everyday speech, "And then this woman told me...." Many times when we do a voiceover, we just plunk down a translation in a "reading," not an "acting," voice. For the sake of convenience, at the editing stage either we or one of our friends read that translation into a microphone. It is hard to conduct tryouts and rehearse actors so as to approximate the tone and flavor of the original speaker. We often do not think about issues of translation in as respectful a way as does, let's say, *The PTL Club*, which I've seen in South America. The Spanish version of the program does not assume its viewers are facile readers and would stay with a television program with subtitles (i.e., middle-class viewers). It uses excellently acted voiceovers in Spanish. Christian television pays attention to the details of "television translation."

THE 700 CLUB

The 700 Club has a magazine format, showing different types of material, including different types of prayer sessions, in its daily show, which is broadcast several times a day and on several different cable networks. It often has segments of reportage that look like the news. Making "news," for example, was Rock Hudson's deathbed conversion by one of his fundamentalist nurses. Similarly, in the "Walker spy story" in October 1987, the Walkers were turned in by one of their daughters, a woman who was a *700 Club* viewer. In another instance, reportage that looked like the news and Pat Robertson's own commentary explained at length the problems faced by a man named Otwell in Texas, who had made national news when it was discovered that he had physically abused the students at his Baptist boys' school, a place to which judges also regularly remanded delinquent youth for reform. Robertson took time to valorize this case because, in fact, one of the political victories of the religious Right in certain court cases has been around issues of education and religious freedom. He criticized the degree to which the state controls the education of children.

By my standards, Robertson's time on the air is dull. Far livelier are the reportage segments that are a mixture of news and soap opera. Often a guest in the studio, the upper-middle-class living room set, will tell a story about their past. The story will be illustrated with location shooting, the guest seen outdoors, line drawings and sketches (like a courtroom scene on the news, sketched by "our court reporter"), and dramatic reenactments. For example, a Latino man dressed in a suit tells that he had been an addict and pusher. We see scenes of him in prison, where a visitor comes to read him the Bible, "dialogue" with him, and help him to Jesus. Usually, the studio witness will say, "And at that point, I was free of drugs (or alchohol or gambling)." Although Christian television does not usually advocate seeing a psychologist, it still pays its cultural debt to Freud by giving explanations of childhood trauma to account for current vice. For example, the ex-convict's father had been a pusher who led his son into the world of drugs.

The dramatic reenactment is obviously theatrical but is simply inserted into the witness' story. Its theatricality and the contrast between two types of discourse are never commented upon. As a woman tells how she was on drugs, you see a shot of a woman in a bathroom putting pills in her mouth. In a sense, mainstream news uses a similar manipulative tactic. Its visual images do no more than illustrate an authoritative commentary and add emotional spice. And mainstream news is less overtly theatrical. When I see somebody on *The 700 Club* telling their story along with a dramatic reenactment of them going to the medicine cabinet for pills, it seems a more honest iconographic representation than what the news offers. Our hegemonic discourse is Manichean, interpreting social process in terms of good and evil and not in terms of interacting contradictions. In this particular case, we can see in the similarity of sound/image relations across genres that there is little difference between melodrama and the news.

The same program that depicted the struggle around the ERA in Vermont had as its other "news" segments a report on Halloween as satanic (including modern day witches, who look in physical appearance like the "feminist" type I described earlier, and an interview with Z. Budapest, a self-proclaimed feminist witch). To contrast and offer an image of a more ideal woman, a financial advisor on Wall Street told how she left a Bible out on her desk when she met with clients. This was followed with

retarded because they were good workers.

The "news" here on *The 700 Club* sets out political issues mixed in with personal issues mixed in with soap opera, but it deals with things we don't otherwise see on television. In other words, the retarded do vote and do work, but some of us on the left don't even think of the retarded as worthy citizens to appeal to; they rarely enter the space of our imagination. Yet having no psychic space to think about something, either in the media or in the mind, is the principle ideological mechanism in our culture that maintains sexism and racism and all the other -isms. Here, the political motivation of the segment seemed to underscore that the genial Christian employer would have his workers' gratitude and confidence and thus could deliver up x number of votes. If we look at other *700 Club* segments, we'll find many similar "political" tactics but usually mixed in with utopian elements. What other space do the retarded have on television?

PERSUASION TACTICS

I have written extensively on Brecht and Godard and appreciate arguments about the mass media's emotional seductiveness. But it's time for us to reconsider television's emotional appeal, for what, in fact, would it mean to make activist media without such appeal? We can see that Christian television has developed, at great expense, a fine emotional "hook." Since every TV preacher gives a pitch for money, it is useful to analyze these pitches for their persuasion tactics. First of all, when the money's collected, people always get something, such as a cassette tape, back in the mail. Most significantly, the person's name goes on the mailing list. (According to a friend who sends out occasionally for literature, you'll be pulled from *The 700 Club*'s list if they don't hear from you several times a year.)

Furthermore, the phone bank service (people will pray with you) is supported on screen by a narrative device that I have seen only on Christian television. Every so often the preacher will deliver an incredibly intense direct address to the TV viewers by talking straight to the camera: "Close your eyes. Pray with me. Jesus is with you. Kneel by your television set." Collapsing distance like this presumes the material reality of TV preaching and saving souls over the airwaves. In fact, people must be at home alone if they follow these instructions, because I cannot imagine suddenly kneeling and praying in front of other family members. So the preacher makes a calculated appeal to the lonely. Such instructions are often followed with words like, "Call me, and tell me how you felt. There'll be someone here to talk to you." The phone call is just to talk to a warm and caring voice and tell how you felt. But then, of course, you will be asked for money. (There was a skirmish for about a year during which time toll-free numbers were dropped from the most popular shows such as Falwell's because some gay newspapers had printed the toll-free numbers with suggestions that readers call in and give false pledges. One enterprising radical even had his computer continuously calling and hanging up. I do not know about either the legal or logistical issues but have observed that most Christian television programs have toll-free numbers back again.)



"One day, just after shooting up, Jim pulled over to the roadside and asked the Lord to help him. That night, alone in his room, he watched *The 700 Club* and found the answer to his prayer."



Ben Kinchlow: "Father, we come to you in the name of Jesus for a miraculous intervention in the life of Danielle. We bind up the angel of death, and we speak to that tumor in the name of Jesus. We command to begin to dissolve now...in Jesus' name."

Television spectacle has the voice of patriarchy behind it. Male experts intone the ads; the news relies on the Pentagon. Ted Koppel and Phil Donahue play the fair-minded liberal dads. Christian television has, as one of its internal contradictions, a perpetual conflict between Daddies, and that conflict is often enacted in the individual Daddy's TV style. Pat Robertson is on the political ascendency, and his media is polished. He's leaving his role as a preacher to become much more the news moderator, a sort of Ted Koppel type, but he still leads his Bible seminars. Jerry Falwell is on the decline nationally and has gone back to be the head of an evangelical university in his old hometown in Virginia. Jim Bakker regularly complains about being turned in to the authorities by other preachers for tax evasion, and his and Tammy's ever expanding theme park is always deep in debt.

Both the pitches for money and the pitches for salvation are shaped by similar rhetorical devices. The preachers use repetition, a regular cadence, and a certain kind of rhetorical speaking voice. In a pattern which is familiar to both teachers of the retarded and women trying to teach men about sexism, the preachers set out the tasks for the audience in terms of very small steps. Secretaries deal with bosses this way, as do parents with children, so the tone is not uncommon to us. It just does not seem very adult. Yet to present a task in terms of very small steps, ones almost effortlessly accomplished, is a useful tactic for progressive direct mail campaigns. Any time you send out a mailing, you should enclose three postcards addressed to Congresspeople or the President which are all filled out, both front and back. People only have to sign their name, put on a stamp, and mail the card. The result is that anybody who has taken this kind of small step toward your cause thereafter identifies with it. Greenpeace taught me this tactic. A mailing from Greenpeace always includes postcards. This powerful persuasion tactic of asking someone to do something that takes no effort at all assumes that even the lazy can be stimulated to commitment to an organized effort.

To analyze one of Jimmy Swaggart's sermons in detail will indicate the kind of showmanship and rhetorical mastery which revivalist preachers have passed on through generations and which they are now effectively applying to television. In a sermon in a soccer stadium in Buenos Aires, he first gave the crowd the details of the venality that led to damnation, then he told them that no institution could save them, only the Lord's sweet grace raining upon them. At that point he said to them as they were all crying and weeping, "Now raise your hand...." Here was the first small step; it's easy to raise your hand. Next, still in the imperative mode (you give imperatives like this to children and distraught sick people), Swaggart said, "Now step down to the front...." People had a distance to go to get down from the stands into the soccer stadium's playing field. "Now step down to the front, so the whole world can know how many have come to Jesus..." The people going down to the preacher's platform knew that they would be on television. They were crying, and they held

those hands up, and they kept walking down there in a crowd. Then Swaggart said, "We're waiting for you. God is waiting for you. Come on right now. You're all washed clean, free of darkness."

At that point, Swaggart addressed the camera to speak to us at home: "It's for you. Your name is on this service. I want you on TV to pray with me." Then, "Repeat." As he encouraged viewers to repeat some phrase, even if only mentally, it moved them to take a step to follow his line. Similarly Jerry Falwell said, in a verbal series that reflected the increasing commitment he desired from his viewers, "Write me a letter. Join our prayer. Give me a vote of confidence. Send a check."

EMOTION

Ever since the high-culture lovers of the Frankfurt School condemned mass culture as capitalist and manipulative, leftists have found it convenient to condemn first Hollywood film and later television. But a lot of us have that set going all the time. I like television because it comes into my home, and I can turn it on and have the sense of voices talking even if I plan to be in another room. As Elayne Rapping says in *The Looking Glass World of Nonfiction TV*, "The social role of television, in its broadest sense, is to provide that lost sense of community integrity in a fragmented world." Rapping asserts that we now use television to create this communal sense synthetically because of capitalist economic structures. However, I've also seen a good amount of communist television, and I'm not sure that the communists know any better what it is that people want out of television. I think that people use television like a household friend. They want it to deliver up emotion. People like television's effect of live reality. They like the immediacy of speech. In Christian television, such as *The PTL Club*, every so often a segue reveals how carefully calculated the "reality effect" is. In other words, you may see people sitting around the living room set jawing about the topic of the day, whatever it was, maybe incest, maybe films. Then one of them will say, "That is the bliss of coming to Jesus. And now so and so will sing to you about the bliss of coming to Jesus." Only a sophisticated media viewer will realize, when such segues come, how calculated this all was—the move from live speech to the spectacle of singing.

Jim Bakker capitalizes on the immediacy of live presentation. He and Tammy love to go around and show you the latest building going up in Heritage USA. Jim likes to walk in front of a camera person doing handheld work to show you backstage life. Now, for me as a woman viewer, I find it fascinating to see how the backstage work is managed and run mostly by women: women doing makeup and women running computers. It's a visual symbol of how women keep these big media empires going.

What's most effective about Christian television is the same thing that is most effective about network news. It has little to do with the delivery of information and much more to do with a kind of right brain, emotional structuring of how to feel about social issues. We soon forget a program's details. What remains are the kind of symbolic events and the feelings which adhere to them which we experience in dreams. In this way, for example, Christian television structures how to think about abortions. Many working-class women who mouth pro-life ideology have had abortions, their daughters have had abortions and the Christian parents have paid for it. But the television program gives a dream structure in which to dream your abortion forever after.

And it gives a dream structure in which to dream terrorism. And the dream structure in which to dream communism. And the dream image of the few acceptable, tidy, middle-class, upwardly mobile, well-coiffed, well-dressed blacks who are the "worthy" blacks fit to associate with. And there's the dream structure of constant homophobia. Those structures remain long after the specific subject matter of the programs has changed completely.

Most significantly, in terms of how these structures are implanted and the kinds of structures implanted, there's no difference betwen Christian television, public television, the news, sports and anything else on TV. They all function to reinforce dominant ideology through television's emotional power. Think, for example, about the dream structure of xenophobia, fear of the stranger. The Arabs are chaotic or terrorists, the Japanese will dominate our economy, we are flooded with illegal aliens, Africa and Haiti and gays are the source of AIDS. In the United States at the end of empire the government and the mass media share the same xenophobia, fear of the other, fear of losing control at the center of power.

Media activists, radicals, and feminists probably pay so little attention to Christian television because there we are depicted as the other. White feminists are immediately identified as the other—as I mentioned before—by our dress, and by almost nothing else. Our class position is identified by our external signs, and we can be flashed on Christian television as the "they" not worthy of knowing. Our image, especially when we are grouped together in public at a demonstration, promotes fear.

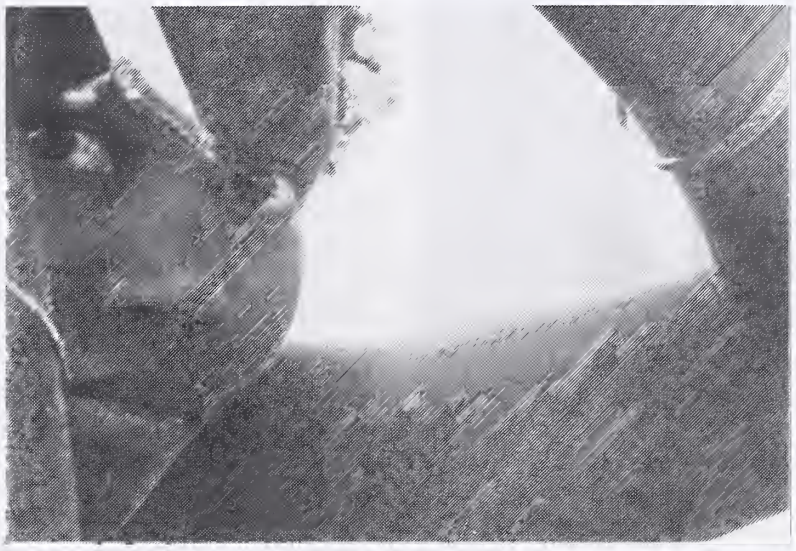
Television has a power to manipulate the connotative aspects of an image for emotional impact. And it resounds with all the emotional tones of the human voice, like a non-musical opera. People turn to television for that emotion, which I understand when I leave the TV playing while I do other things in the house. A radical media aesthetic may reject that aspect of television communication and reception, but what would be left? If we are honest, we will not lay the blame for the structures of manipulation at the doorsteps of Christian television producers, for, on the whole, they merely understand the parameters of their medium very well.

Since I have been making media with Nicaraguan video artists who want to have their viewers both understand and love the revolution, I neither want to make video nor participate in a political project without intense emotional engagement. In this age of information explosion, everyone has access to analyses of racism, sexism, and imperialism. It's available in the media around us. The task for radicals is to make media, especially television, that inspires people to *want* to know the truth and to want to analyze their own social reality, and, along with that understanding, to be inspired to act for social change. Horace called it *utile dulci*.. "Mingle the useful with the sweet," he instructed, so that people will want to learn. Both we and Christian television seek to inspire people to act, but we also want people to learn, and to learn in a way that breaks down the category of the other in an ever expanding way.

Julia Lesage is a videomaker, director of the tape Las Nicas, *and coeditor of* Jump Cut.

© Julia Lesage 1987

QUESTIONS OF IMAGES AND POLITICS



Still frame from *Reassemblage*, by Trinh T. Minh-ha.
Courtesy filmmaker

Trinh T. Minh-ha

Let me start by asking myself: What do I expect from a film? What I expect is borne out by what I work at bringing forth in my films. The films I make, in other words, are made to contribute to the body of film works I like and would like to see.

Through the way it is made, the way it relates to its subject, as well as through the viewers' receptions, I expect that it solicits my critical abilities and sharpens my awareness of how ideological patriarchy and hegemony work.

The commercial and ideological habits
of our society favor narrative with as
definite a closure as possible once the
narration is consumed one can throw
it away and move on to buy another one

clear linear entirely digestible

There is more and more a need to make film politically (as differentiated from making political films). We are moving here from the making of a genre of film to the making of a wide range of genres of film in which the making itself is political. Since women have for decades worked hard at widening the definition of "political," since there is no subject that is "apolitical" or too narrow, but only narrow, apolitical representations of subjects, a film does not necessarily need to attack governmental institutions and personalities to be "political." Different realms and levels of institutional values govern our daily lives. It is therefore in working at shaking any system of values, starting with the system of cinematic values on which its politics is entirely dependent, that a politically-made film takes on its full significance.

never installed within transgression
never dwells elsewhere

Patriarchy and hegemony. Not really two, not one either. My history, my story, is the history of the First World/Third World, dominant/oppressed, man/woman relationship. When speaking about the Master, I am necessarily speaking about both Him and the West. Patriarchy and hegemony. From orthodox to progressive patriarchy, from direct colonization to indirect, subtly pervasive hegemony, things have been much refined, but the road is still long and the fight still goes on.

It is thrilling to think—to know that for any act
of mine, I shall get twice as much praise or twice
as much blame. It is quite exciting to hold the center
of the national stage, with the spectators not
knowing whether to laugh or to weep

—Zora Neale Hurston

Hegemony is most difficult to deal with because it does not really spare any of us. Hegemony is established to the extent that the world view of the rulers is also the world view of the ruled. It calls attention to the routine structures of everyday thought, down to common sense itself. In dealing with hegemony, we are not only challenging the dominance of Western cultures, but also their identities as unified cultures. In other words, we call attention to the fact that there is a Third World in every First World and vice-versa. The master is made



Still frame from *Reassemblage*, by Trinh T. Minh-ha.
Courtesy filmmaker

to recognize that his culture is neither homogeneous nor monolithic, that he is just an other among others.

> *One's sense of self is always mediated by the image one has of the other. (I have asked myself at times whether a superficial knowledge of the other, in terms of some stereotype, is not a way of preserving a superficial image of oneself).*
>
> —*Vincent Crapanzano*

What every feminist, politically-made film unavoidably faces is at once: 1. the position of the filmmaker, 2. the cinematic reality, and 3. the viewers' readings. A film, in other words, is a site that sets into play a number of subjectivities—those of the filmmaker, the filmed subjects, and the viewers (including here those who have the means or are in a position to circulate, expose, and disseminate the films).

> *The stereotyped quiet, obedient, conforming modes of Japanese behavior clashed with white expectations of being a motivated, independent, ambitious thinker. When I was with whites, I worried about talking loud enough; when I was with Japanese, I worried about talking too loud.*
>
> —*Joanne Harumi Sechi*

> *Walking erect and speaking in an inaudible voice, I have tried to turn myself American-feminine. Chinese communication was loud, public. Only sick people had to whisper.*
>
> —*Maxine Hong Kingston*

□

The assumption that the audience already exists, that it is a given, and that the filmmaker has to gear her making towards the so-called needs of this audience is an assumption that seems to ignore that needs are made and audiences are built. What is ideological is often confused with what is natural—or biological, as often implied in women's context. The media system as it exists may be most efficient for reaching the audience desired, but it allows little direct input from the audience into the creative process (critics and citizen groups are not defined as part of the audience, for example).

A responsible work today seems to me above all as one that shows, on the one hand, a political commitment and an ideological lucidity, and is, on the other hand, interrogative by nature, instead of being merely prescriptive. In other words, a work that involves her story in history; a work that acknowledges the difference between lived experience and representation; a work that is careful not to turn a struggle into an object of consumption and requires that responsibility be assumed by the maker as well as by the audience, without whose participation no solution emerges, for no solution exists as a given.

The logic of reaching "everybody" often encourages a levelling of differences—a minimum of elements that might offend the imaginary average viewer, and a standardization of content and expectations.

> *Apartheid precludes any contact with people of different races which might undermine the assumption of essential difference.*
>
> —*Vincent Crapanzano*

Working against this levelling of differences is, also, resisting that very notion of difference, which defined in the Master's terms, always resorts to the simplicity of essences. Divide and conquer has for centuries been his creed, his formula of success. But a different terrain of consciousness is being explored for some time now. A terrain in which clear-cut divisions and dualistic oppositions such as counter-cinema versus Hollywood, science versus art, documentary versus fiction, objectivity versus subjectivity, masculine versus feminine may serve as departure points for analytical purpose, but are no longer satisfactory, if not entirely untenable to the critical mind.

> *What does present a challenge is an organization that consists either in close association or in alliance of black, white, Indian and Coloured. Such a body constitutes a negation of the Afrikaans' theory of separateness, their medieval clannishness.*
>
> —*Ezekiel Mphahlele*

□

I have often been asked about what some viewers call the "lack of conflicts" in my films. Psychological conflict is often equated with substance and depth. Conflicts in Western contexts often serve to define identities. My suggestion to this so-called lack is: Let difference replace conflict. Difference as understood in many feminist and non-Western contexts, difference as foregrounded in my film work, is not opposed to sameness, nor synonymous with separateness. Difference, in other words, does not necessarily give rise to separatism. There are differences as well as similarities within the concept of difference. One can further say that difference is not what makes conflict. It is beyond and alongside conflict. This is where confusion often arises and where the challenge can be issued. Many of us still hold on to the concept of difference not as a tool of creativity—to question multiple forms of repression and

dominance—but as a tool of segregation—to exert power on the basis on racial and sexual essences. The apartheid-type of difference.

difference, yes, but difference
within the border of your homeland, they say
White rule and the policy of ethnic divisions

Let me point to a few examples of practices of such a notion of difference.

The positioning of voices in film. In documentary practice, for example, we are used to hearing either a *unified* voiceover, or a string of *opposing, clashing* views from witnesses which is organized so as to bring out objectively the so-called two sides of an event. So, either in unification or in opposition. In one of my films, *Naked Spaces*, I use three different voices to bring out three modes of informing. The voices are *different*, but *not opposed* to each other, and this is precisely where a number of viewers have reading problems. Some of us tend to consume the three as one because we are trained to not hearing how voices are positioned and to not having to deal with difference other than as opposition.

The use of silence. On the one hand, we face the danger of inscribing femininity as absence, as lapse and blank in rejecting the importance of the act of enunciation. On the other hand, we understand the necessity to place women on the side of negativity (Kristeva) and to work in "undertones" (Irigaray) in our attempts at undermining patriarchal systems of values. Silence is so commonly set in opposition with speech. Silence as a will not to say or a will to unsay, a language of its own, has barely been explored.

The Veil. (As I stated elsewhere), if the act of unveiling has a liberating potential, so does the act of veiling. It all depends on the context in which such act is carried out, or more precisely, on how and where women see dominance. Difference should neither be defined by the dominant sex nor by the dominant culture. So that when women decide to lift the veil, one can say that they do so in defiance of their men's oppressive right to their bodies; but when they decide to keep or to put back on the veil they once took off, they may do so to reappropriate their space or to claim anew difference, in defiance of genderless hegemonic standardization. (One can easily apply the metaphor of the veil here to filmmaking.)

□

Making films from a different stance supposes 1. a re-structuring of experience and a possible rupture with patriarchal filmic codes and



Still frame from *Naked Spaces - Living Is Round*, by Trinh T. Minh-ha.
Courtesy Women Make Movies



Still frame from *Reassemblage*, by Trinh T. Minh-ha.
Courtesy filmmaker

conventions; 2. a difference in naming—the use of familiar words and images, and of familiar techniques in contexts whose effect is to displace, expand or change their preconceived, hegemonically accepted meanings; 3. a difference in conceiving "depth," "development," or even "process" (processes within processes are, for example, not quite the same as a process or several linear processes); 4. a difference in understanding rhythms and repetitions—repetitions that never reproduce nor lead to the same ("an other among others" as mentioned earlier); 5. a difference in cuts, pauses, pacing, silence; 6. a difference, finally, in defining what is "cinematic" and what is not.

The relationship between images and words should render visible and audible the "cracks" (which have always been there; nothing new...) of a filmic language that usually works at glueing things together as smoothly as possible, banishing thereby all reflections, supporting an ideology that keeps the workings of its own language as invisible as possible, mystifying hereby filmmaking, stifling criticism, and generating complacency among both makers and viewers.

Working with differences requires that one faces one's own limits so as to avoid indulging in them, taking them for someone else's limits; so as to assume one's capacity and responsibility as subject working at modifying these limits. The patriarchal conception of difference, as we have seen together, relies heavily on biological essences. In refusing such a contextualization of difference, we have to remain aware of the necessary dialectics of closure and openness. If, in breaking with patriarchal closures, feminism leads us to a series of musts and must-nots, then this only leads us to other closures. And these closures will then have to be re-opened again so that we can keep on growing and modifying the limits in which we tend to settle down.

Difference is not otherness. And while otherness has its laws and interdictions, difference always implies the interdependency of these two-sided feminist gestures: that of affirming "I am like you" while pointing insistently to the difference, and that of reminding "I am different" while unsettling every definition of otherness arrived at.

Trinh T. Minh-ha is a writer, composer, and filmmaker who currently teaches cinema at San Francisco State University. Her filmic work includes Reassemblage *and* Naked Spaces - Living Is Round.

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PACIFIC PICTURESQUE: THE HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



***Bayan Ko* director Lino Brocka led the contingent of new Filippino filmmakers to the Hawaii International Film Festival and delivered the keynote address.**

Courtesy Asian Cine-Vision

Caroll Blue

When the Hawaii International Film Festival gets underway in December, the gentle and relaxing Hawaiian ambience provides mainland U.S. filmmakers a pleasant respite from mainland winters and Asian-Pacific filmmakers the chance to show their films to western audiences. Simply because the festival is planned to promote dialogue between diverse cultures, unexpected interactions usually occur between the two groups. The festival's ongoing theme, "Strangers When We Meet," coincides with the mission of the Institute of Culture and Communications, where the event has been housed for seven years. This institute is one of four making up the East-West Center, established in 1960 by the U.S. government to bring together people from the U.S., Asia, and the Pacific to study and create solutions to problems of change—social, economic, cultural—as the interdependence between these countries increases.

Film as art and as a social and cultural factor are taken seriously as a means to promote cross-cultural understanding between the U.S. and the Asia-Pacific region—from Iran, Afghanistan, China, Korea, and Japan through Indo-China to Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands. The East-West Center Award, the festival's only prize, goes to the film that best supports the goal of intercultural understanding. This year's award went to Euthana Mukdasnit's *Butterfly and Flower*, a young boy's coming of age story that is the first Thai film to focus on the Moslem religion. But every film invited embodies this overall humanistic theme.

Regarding the treatment of visiting filmmakers, the typical festival logic seemed to prevail. Each invited filmmaker is matched with a festival host who plans a special dinner and/or a reception, accompanies you on a tour, and attends your screening; one host family provided a furnished apartment to a filmmaker during her stay in Honolulu. And each filmmaker is given a customized schedule of events and packets of passes to events, along with invitations to receptions, parties, and informal gatherings practically every night of the week.

At the HIFF, East and West indeed meet—through films, filmmakers, scholars, artists, journalists, and other film festival directors, as well as the various audiences attracted to screenings. In 1986 attendance topped 50,000, counting those at the main Oahu screenings and tours of film programs to neighboring islands. The films selected and the issues they embrace are introduced in several imaginative ways—thematically, through retrospective programs, in seminars, symposiums, and workshops, benefits and special showcases. For the most part, independent, noncommerical films constituted the vast majority of the past year's 42 feature films, 73 documentaries, and 12 short films, and provided the topics for seminars in the busy schedule. However, a serious nod was also given to Hollywood-style commercial films. These were featured at some of the festival's central events—the closing night benefit (*Crimes of the Heart*), a huge festival ball (with guests like Phyllis Diller, Sally Kellerman, Jack Lord, and Sashi Kapoor) that honored director Hal Roach (*Laurel and Hardy* and *Our Gang*), and an "American Comedy Seminar" featuring Roach, Colin Higgins (*Nine to Five*, *Out on a Limb*) and writer Harry Shearer (*Martin Mull Presents the History of White People in America* and *This Is Spinal Tap*), in addition to a screening of the American Film Institute's recently restored version of *Lost Horizon*.

Every year, the festival highlights several topics. In 1986, these included comedy, Australian cinema, and Pacific Islands films, which were extensively explored and well-conceived. For instance, the comedy track featured a television comedy retrospective, a seminar on producing comedy television specials, a series on Chinatown and U.S. film comedy, five Japanese humorous short films, a Humor in Cinema series featuring 21 feature films (including Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It*; Nadia Tass' *Malcolm,* and Yojiro Takita's *Comic Magazine*), and a four-day symposium with-scholarly papers on cross-cultural studies of humor in China, Japan, India, Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Pakistan, Australia, and the U.S.

The Pacific Islands film series represented the festival's effort to bring unknown regional filmmakers to a wider public. The majority of the films in this section dealt with issues of native peoples' land rights and the cultural imperialism of outside powers, often the United States. A retrospective of the work of Australian documentary filmmaker Dennis O'Rourke was shown within this series.

U.S. independent producers—and Asian-American cinema in particular—was similarly well-showcased at the 1986 HIFF: Steven Okazaki's *Living on Tokyo Time* premiered on the festival's opening night. Other screenings in the festival's schedule included *Beacon Hill Boys* (Hayaskak/Mochizuki/Satake Blauvelt), *East of Occidental* (Maria Gargiulo and Lucy Ostrander), *Jazz Is My Native Language* (Renee Cho), *Made in China* (Lisa Hsia), *The New Puritans* (Tenzing Sonam and Ritu Sarim), and *Yuki Shmoda* (John Esaki).

HIFF's emphasis on cross-cultural communication is so strong that its does not lend itself well to being a marketplace similar to the U.S. Film Festival (for independent features) or the American Film and Video Festival (for independent documentaries). San Francisco filmmaker Loni Ding, who has participated in the HIFF, remarked, however, that independents with specialized cultural interests sympathetic to the Pacific Rim may be able to patch together some financing available from the island states.

There's yet another remarkable aspect of this festival. In the past seven years, director Jeannette Paulson has managed to attract an overwhelming list of corporate and individual donors—financial, in-kind, volunteers—so practically every screening and seminar in the program is free of charge to the public. This enables the festival to sponsor free receptions and free transportation for free screenings at 12 theaters on Oahu. (A rumor circulated, though, that HIFF was pressured by outside interests to prevent the showing of O'Rourke's *Half-Life*, an indictment against the U.S. government hydrogen bomb tests in the Marshall Islands and the subsequent use of the natives as experimental guinea pigs. Whether or not these rumors were accurate is unclear, but what the incident reveals is the underlying tension that may be brewing as HIFF begins to grow in size and scope and the shape of future relationships with its corporate and individual donors.) The festival's largesse creates a special atmosphere for dialogue and cultural exchanges to occur. Extensive media coverage is also included in this impressive package.

The most noticeable oversights on the part of festival organizers became evident when the festival dealt with films not made in 35mm or 16mm. Raymond Red, a Philippine super 8 filmmaker experienced great difficulty screening his films. Robert Weide, a PBS comedy specials producer, had problems with video equipment at a large number of his screenings. And, although documentary films made up the bulk of the schedule, they seemed to draw smaller audiences than those for dramatic films.

I left Honolulu with the impression that I'd seen something of the future world. Now, when I think about myself as a black filmmaker working in the U.S., I am aware of being situated within a world with diverse neighbors. This awareness occurred only at HIFF as I watched the Pacific-Rim—the inner workings of its people and their issues—revealed before my eyes in celluloid at 24 frames per second.

Carroll Blue is an assistant professor of telecommunications and film at San Diego State University and is a documentary filmmaker. Two of her films, Varnette's World: A Study of a Young Artist *and* Conversations with Roy DeCarava *have been shown nationally on PBS and received major festival awards.*

HIFF dates: Nov. 29-Dec. 6. Deadline: June 1. Selected films reflect a "humanistic perspective" of the lives & intercultural relationships between people of the US, Asia & the Pacific. 1986 judges included Susan Sontag, Sashi Kapoor, Bill Bennett, Nei Kawarabata & Lino Brocka, who was also the keynote speaker. Following the fest's run on Oahu, it travels to Kauai, Maui, Lanai & Moloka. 1/2", Beta, 3/4" & 16mm accepted for preview; final format 16mm or 3/4". No entry fee. Contact: Jeanette Paulson, coordinator, HIFF, East West Center, 1777 East-West Rd., Honolulu, HI 96848; (808) 944-7666.

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Atlanta Film & Video Festival

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement** & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

CINDY COMPETITION, November, Los Angeles. The Assn. of Visual Communicators (AVC), a national nonprofit org. of film & video professionals, first mounted this competition in 1959 w/ a small number of industrial films; it now annually showcases "some of the best audiovisual productions in the non-theatrical industry." Over 800 entries vied last year in 18 main categories reflecting current subject areas & media formats, incl. television info, PR, ecology, education, docs, music/fashion videos, interactive videodisc, sales/marketing & technical/artistic craft displayed in other cats. (writing, visual effects, production design, photography, talent). Awards are plaques. Entry fees: $70 members, $95 nonmembers, student fees 50% reg. fee. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", interactive videodisc levels I, II, III, slides, 16/35mm filmstrips. Deadline: June 5. Contact: James F. Griffith, AVC, 900 Palm Ave., Suite B, S. Pasadena, CA 91030; (818) 441-2274.

COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 28-29, Ohio. Now in its 35th year & one of the longest running fests in the US, this competition accepts post-'85 doc & feature entries in the areas of art & culture, incl. animated, experimental, fiction, fine arts, humor, performing arts; industrial; education; health & medicine; social studies; religion/ethics & travel. Each cat. has its own judge, many of whom have judged for the fest for many yrs. No cash awards presented; statuettes & plaques are incentives & are for cats. incl. best of fest, innovation, screenwriting. All entrants receive certificate of honorable mention. A "media of print" cat. is open to posters, brochures & reviews pertaining to film or video. Entry fees are steep, from $70-205; the fest is supported by entry fees & duplication of statuettes. All shipping fees are the responsibility of the filmmaker. Chris statuette winners may apply for entry in the Academy Awards via recommendation from the sponsoring Columbus Film Council. Last yr over 500 entries received & 50 chosen for awards, incl. *Computer Magic*, by Colyer DuPont, *Something in the Basement*, by Victor Salva & *The Reel Florida*, by Walter J. Klein. In past, foreign entries received from Canada, England, Australia, Japan & Germany. Formats: 16mm & 1/2". Deadline: July 15. Contact: Nancy Maxwell, Film Council of Columbus, 1229 W. Third Ave., Columbus, OH 43212; (614) 291-2149.

DENVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 8-15, Colorado. This growing celebration, now in its 10th year, attracts a large number of filmmakers, film celebs & film critics. Last year more than 90 films from 20 countries were shown at sold out screenings, featuring films like *Hour of the Star*, *Betty Blue*, *River's Edge* & *Down by Law*. New Am. Cinema & Doc sections, in particular, showcased works by U.S. independents, including Ronee Blakely's *I Played It for You*, Mark Romanek's *Static*, Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March*, Victoria Schutz' *Holy Terror*, Matthew Patrick's *Grafitti*, Nancy Kelly's *Cowgirls: Portraits of American Ranch Women*, Vivienne Verdon-Roe's*Women—For America, For the World*, Brigitte Berman's *Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got* & Robert Mugge's *Saxophone Colossus*, which premiered. Shorts incl. Rhonda Richard's *Seer of Seers*, Jane Aaron's *Set in Motion* & Michelle Mahrer's *Xidu*. Fest annually organizes tributes; last yr Rod Steiger, Bertrand Tavernier, Jean-Jacques Beneix & Elem Klimov, head of Congress of Soviet Filmmakers, were feted & fest hosted evenings w/ Canadian director Lea Pool, Mexican filmmaker Marcela Fernandez Violante, Elliott Gould & Lou Gossett. Entries accepted btwn June 1 & Aug. 15. Send detailed synopsis & description of work before submitting film so fest can advise on appropriateness. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Contact: Ron Henderson/ Forrest Ceisol, Denver Int'l Film Festival, 999 18th St., Suite 247, Denver, CO 80202; (303) 298-8223.



The documentary *Directed by William Wyler*, directed by Aviva Slesin, premiered last year at the New York Film Festival.
Courtesy the Film Society of Lincoln Center

INTERCOM, October, Chicago. Produced by Michael Kutza through Cinema Chicago, which also organizes Chicago Film Festival. 23rd edition of this festival accepts sponsored industrial productions & is one of the oldest int'l industrial film fests in the US. Competitive industrial & informational cats. cover spectrum of topics, incl. sales, training, PR, energy, arts, sciences & medicine. About 150 industry professionals act as judges. Last yr 50 films/videos/media presentations accepted for awards out of 900 entries. Winning entries presented during Chicago Film Fest, held this yr from Oct. 22-Nov. 8. Top awards are Gold & Silver Hugos to winning prods in each format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", slides, 35mm filmstrips, multimedia, multi-image transfered to film/video; produced in prior yr. Entry fees: film $85, video $80. Deadline: May 30. Contact: Christine Mroz, Intercom 87, 415 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 644-3400.

MARIN COUNTY NATIONAL FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION, July 1-5, San Rafael, California. Annually programmed at Marin County Fair & Expo, attended by crowds approaching 70,000, this fest awards cash prizes in cats. of ind. film or video (up to $1000 & ribbon); animated film or video (up to $900 & ribbon) & student film (up to $800 & ribbon), w/ up to 3 honorable mentions in each of these 6 classes. Because of audience's diversity, films & tapes should be suitable for children. Fest also reserves right to screen finalists' films on local/regional cable or broadcast TV, w/ remuneration being proportionately distributed among the filmmakers. Judges this year incl. Tim Blaskovitch, San Francisco State Univ. Film Dept.; Helen Caswell, Adolph Gasser Film Co.; Joan Safa, KQED; David Bolt, Bay Area Video Coalition; JoAnn Kelly, Video Free America & Ray Telles, KQED. Films & tapes must have been completed after Jan. '86. Format: 16mm, 3/4", running time 30 mins. max. Entry fee: $10. Deadline: May 29. Contact: 17th Annual Marin County National Film & Video Competition, Fairgrounds, San Rafael, CA 94903; (415) 499-6400.

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL & VIDEOFEST, Oct. 9-15, California. This invitational noncompetitive fest will celebrate its 10th anniv. this yr. Has history of presenting acclaimed int'l films & large number of US ind. films. 55 features & docs from 17 countries rounded out last yr's program, which also incl. seminars w/ concentration on issues in ind. filmmaking & tributes to Australian director Peter Weir, animator Shamus Culhane, Sterling Hayden & animation/special effects production company Colossal Pictures. A 2-day video section presents new works in several genres. Jim Jarmusch's *Down by Law* & Tim Hunter's *River's Edge* had their West Coast premieres; US premieres of foreign films included Suzana Amaral's *Hour of the Star*, Raul de la Torres' *Pobre Mariposa*, Darrel

Roodt's *Place of Weeping* & Huang Jain Zong's *A Good Woman*. Other US ind. films showcased included Mark Romanek's *Static*, Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March*, Michael Blackwood's *A Composer's Notes: Philip Glass & the Making of an Opera*, Will Roberts' *American Rebel*, Victor Fridman's *Argentina: The Broken Silence*, Robert Mugge's *Cool Runnings: The Reggae Movie*, Kevin Reynolds' *Fandango*, Lauren Lazin's *Flapper Story*, Richard Sabatte's *The Last Chance* & David Weismann's *Beauties without a Cause*. Other featured films incl. Jean-Jacques Beineix' *Betty Blue*, Alain Cavalier's *Therese*, Leon Marr's *Dancing in the Dark* & Jiri Menzel's *My Sweet Little Village*. Mill Valley is assoc. w/ debuting Singapore Film Fest as sister festival. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", 3/4". Deadline: June 30. Contact: Rita Cahill, director, Mill Valley Film Festival & Videofest, 80 Lomita Dr., Suite 20, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-5256.

NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 25-Oct. 11, New York. The Film Society of Lincoln Center will celebrate its 25th yr of presenting this noncompetitive & very well-publicized fest. Films selected by program committee which this year incl. fest director Richard Roud & critics Richard Corliss, David Denby, Carrie Rickey & David Kehr. Films accepted in dramatic, doc, animated & experimental cats., from those shown at other festivals during previous year or outstanding new productions. All films must be US premieres, w/ no prior public, theatrical, or commercial exhibition or distribution. Last yr feature films from 10 countries were screened. US ind. work tended to be represented by shorts, incl. Anita Thacher's *Loose Corner*, Scott Laster's *Honky-Tonk Bud*, Michael Sciulli/Melissa White's *Quest: A Long Ray's Journey into Light*, Ruth Charny's *Girls in Suits at Lunch*, Jane Aaron's *Set in Motion* & Chuck Workman's *Precious Images*. Doc. features incl. *Directed by William Wyler*, by Aviva Slesin; *International Sweethearts of Rhythm*, by Greta Schiller & Andrea Weiss & *Isaac in America*, by Amram Novak. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preselection on 3/4". Deadline: mid-July. Contact: Marian Masone, Film Society of Lincoln Center, 140 W. 65th St., New York, NY 10023; (212) 877-1800.

TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 4-7, Colorado. An intimate but prestigious fest premiering many important new films. Also features tributes, retrospectives & special programs showcasing rare historic works. No publicity precedes program, which is usually sold out by July on strength of its reputation. Major industry reps, several distribs & large contingent of film buffs make up a substantial part of the bicoastal audience, which usually numbers about 1500. Most features are invited, previewed by the organizers at Cannes, or chosen through recommendations by known filmmakers & professionals. About 50 selected. Shorts welcomed for prescreening. While there is a small possibility that unsolicited work may be selected, codirector Stella Pence welcomes questions from ind. filmmakers on selection criteria. Filmmakers must be present for the screening of their films; fest covers housing costs. Last yr's fest premiered several major features, incl. Fielder Cook's *Seize the Day*, Lizzie Borden's *Working Girls*, David Lynch's *Blue Velvet* & Paul Cox's *Cactus*. US premieres incl. Alain Cavalier's *Therese*, Andrei Tarkovsky's *The Sacrifice* & Zhang Luanxin's *Sacrificed Woman*. The program also featured shorts by Jane Aaron, David Ehrlich & Stan Brakhage & series of films which were banned in Poland. Telluride is in a beautiful setting in southwestern Colorado near glacial valley surrounded by mountain peaks. Feature, doc & short films of any subject or length are prescreened from June 1-Aug. 1. Small fee to cover postage & handling may be charged. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Contact: Stella Pence, Telluride Film Festival, National Film Preserve, Box B1156, Hanover, NH 03755; (603) 643-1255.

UPTOWN SHORT FILM & VIDEO CONTEST, July, New York. This cable channel features independent cinema, classics, foreign films, cult favorites & NY cable premieres. For 2nd yr, it is cosponsoring contest w/ short film distrib Coe Films & MasterColor Transfer in conjunction w/ broadcast tribute to MoMA/Film Society of Lincoln Center's New Directors/New Films, in order to encourage ind. filmmaking. Cash prizes range from $100-500, w/ the winning entries also having a guaranteed showing on Uptown, optional distribution contract w/ Coe Film Associates & film-to-tape transfers. Entries must be 30 min. or less & produced within the 18 mos. prior to March 1. Panel of judges will include prominent members of the film/video industry. Last yr's winners were *Hard Metal's Disease*, by Jon Alpert; *The Locust*, by Paul Holzman; *Not Just Garbage*, by Julie Ackert & *Czechs & Balances*, by Debra Epstein. All winners have press screenings. Entry fee: $10 ($5 for Uptown subscribers). Format: 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: June 5. Contact: Gerri Warren/Debra Wells, Uptown's Short Film & Video Contest, c/o Paragon Cable, 5120 B'way, New York, NY 10034; (212) 304-3000.

FOREIGN

CORK INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 25-Oct. 4, Ireland. 32nd annual edition of this fest incl. in its aims the presentation of new trends in filmmaking & best of contemporary world cinema. '86 fest incl. wealth of US entries. Director Mick Hannigan is very interested in continuing this programming. Entries last year incl. Eugene Corr's *Desert Bloom*, J.P. Somersaulter's *Donna Rosebud*, David Sutherland's *Jack Levine: Feast of Pure Reason*, Susanna Munoz/Lourdes Portillo's *Las Madres de la Plaza Mayo*, Carol Langer's *Radium City*, Mark Romanek's *Static*, Cork Marcheschi/Robert Schwartz' *Survivors: The Blues Today*, Chris Cain's *That Was Then, This Is Now*, David Ehrlich's *Dissipative Fantasies*, Maureen Selwood's *The Rug* & Lucy Winer/Paula deKoenigsburg/Claudette Charbonneau's *Rate It X*. Cats.: features, shorts (under 30 mins), student films, docs, animation; special video section inaugurated last yr. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", 3/4". Films must have been produced in the 12 mos. prior to fest. Competitition section for shorts only. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Michael Hannigan/Theo Dorgan, directors, Cork Int'l Film Festival, Triskel Arts Center, Tobin Street, Cork, Ireland; tel: (021) 271711/275944; telex 75390.

DEAUVILLE FESTIVAL OF AMERICAN FILMS, Sept. 3-14, France. Primarily celebration of Hollywood features, valued by US majors as important launching point for French/European release strategies, this major fest, held in a Normandy coastal resort town, attracts film stars, studio heads, fest directors, film directors, local & national French pols & extensive media. Recently the festival began sidebar incl. French films w/ some US connection. While fest focuses on major studio productions, reps are also interested in increasing ind. films incl. in the program. Screenings last yr, in addition to such films as *Alien* & *Top Gun*, incl. Peter Wang's *A Great Wall*, Sondra Locke's *Ratboy* & Bill

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Sherwood's *Parting Glances*. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: through July. Contact: Deauville Celebration of American Film, 33 Ave. Mac-Mahon, 75017 Paris, France.

JORNADA DE CINEMA DA BAHIA/LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, September, Brazil. Salvador, the capital of Bahia, hosts16th Jornada de Cinema da Bahia & 3rd Latin American Film Festival. A 35mm & 16mm doc competion for Latin American films runs in tandem w/ various film & video sections. Last yr's fest incl. large retrospective of work by Joris Ivens & retrospective of Latin American cartoons; another section was dedicated to 50th anniv. of Spanish Civil War. A concurrent int'l ind. film & video market features short- & medium-length cultural films, feature-length docs & socio-cultural videos, particularly from 3rd world countries but also open to alternative works from elsewhere. Deadline: July 15 (market July 30). Contact: Universidade Federal da Bahia, Jornada de Cinema da Bahia, Rua Araujo Pinho 32-Canela, 40.0000 Salvador Bahia, Brazil; tel: (071) 237-1429 (fest); FAPEX, Av. Ademar de Barros S/N, Pavilhao 2-Ondina, 40.000 Salvador, Bahia, Brazil (market).

MYSTFEST: INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF MYSTERY FILMS, June 22-30, Italy. This year marks the 8th edition of this competitive fest for suspense films, held in Cattolica on Italy's Adriatic coast. Last yr's top prize went to Serge Letoy's *The Fourth Power*, based on the deliberations of jury headed by Claude Chabrol & incl. the *Times*' David Robinson & US writer Stuart Kaminsky. Director Irene Bignardi, the first woman director of an Italian fest, pulled together program featuring retrospective of 13 films based on novels by Cornell Woolrich & incl. US entries *Black Moon Rising*, by Harley Cokliss & *Haunted Honeymoon*, by Gene Wilder. Audiences are "young & plentiful." Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", produced in yr prior to fest & from 30-180 min. Deadline: May 30. Contact: Elisa Resegotti, International Mystery Film Festival, Via dei Coronari, 44, 00186 Roma, Italy; tel: (06) 6567902, or Centro Culturale, P. Republica 2, 47033 Cattolica, Italy; tel: (0541) 967802; telex: 551084 CADRIA 1.

ROYAN FESTIVAL OF ENVIRONMENT & NATURE FILMS, September, France. Cash prizes of 10,000 francs go to films which have anything to do w/ nature: e.g., knowledge of, attack on, protection of, publicizing environmental probs. Max: 60-min., produced in the 18 mos. preceding fest. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: June 30. Contact: Festival du Film sur l'Environment et la Nature (RIENA), 26 Passage Hanriot, 92400 Courbevoie, France; tel: 43340520; telex: MCI611376.

SAO PAOLO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, October, Brazil. 1987 will mark 11th year of this well-attended noncompetitive fest that aims to present "the most representative moments of current cinema." Over 100 feature & doc films from 25 countries screened last yr. Fest cosponsored by state & private companies & headed by Brazilian film critic Leon Cakoff. Wide-ranging programming incl. wk of Dutch & Czech films; British films—incl. Stephen Frear's *My Beautiful Laundrette*, Neil Jordan's *Mona Lisa*, Derek Jarman's *Caravaggio* & Alex Cox's *Sid & Nancy*—French entries incl. Jean-Luc Godard's *Detective*, Jean-Jacques Beiniex's *The Moon in the Gutter* & Umban U. Kset's *Nttrudu* (coproduced w/ Guinea Bissau); German entries *Sugarbaby*, by Percy Adlon & *Tokyo-Ga*,

by Wim Wenders & entries from Finland, Sweden, Argentina, Japan, Brazil, Austria, New Zealand, Spain & Chile. The fest is hospitable to US independents; US films screened incl. Lizzie Borden's *Working Girls*, Stuart Gordon's *Re-Animator* & Victoria Mudd/Eileen Terry's *Broken Rainbow*. Terry reports that the fest was very well-organized, shipping arrangements went smoothly, organizers were quite cooperative & fest admin. voluntarily compiled & sent all clips, reviews & articles that appeared on the film entry & the festival, which has been useful in their publicity. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Contact: Leon Cakoff, director/Iara Lee, producer, Al. Lorena, 937 Cj 302, Sao Paolo, 01424 Brazil; tel: 11 883 5137. Director Leon Cakoff may also be contacted through the Brazilian newspaper *Folha de Sao Paolo*, Al. Barao de Limeira, 425 Sao Paolo, CEB 01202, Brazil; tel: 11 874 225; telex 1122930.

TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 25-Oct. 4, Japan. This festival, which debuted in '85 & will launch its 2nd edition this year, is said to have a particular interest in young US filmmakers & director Michio Morioka is enthusiastic about reaching US independents. A 3-member team visited NY & LA in Jan. to preview films for possible inclusion. Sections incl. International Competition, "Young Cinema" section (geared to either "promising" directors under 35 or directors making their directorial debut w/ the entry film who have directed no more than 5 commercial films); section showcasing Asia-Pacific films & section featuring films by Japanese directors. In addition, 2-day series of symposia is planned, featuring a section on audiovisual theft. Several related film events will be held in conjunction, incl. a "Fantastic Film Festival," "International Women's Film Week" & "Selected Films from around the World." The 14 films chosen for competition, which must have been produced in the 16 months prior to the fest, will compete for a Grand Prix & other prizes, incl. best director, best actress/actor, best artistic contribution, best screenplay & special jury prize. All directors & casts of the nominated films are guests of the festival. An int'l 9-member jury will consider films in both Competition & Young Cinema sections. Young Cinema Section features 2 awards—Sakura Gold & Sakura Silver—with exceptionally high financial awards attached. The '85 jury, headed by David Puttnam, split a pot of $1.5-million 3 ways, w/ awards going to Japanese filmmaker Shingi Somai's *Typhoon Club*; Hungarian director Peter Gothar's *Time Stands Still* & Turkish director Ali Ozgenturk's *At (The Horse)*. These significant prizes are to encourage & fund future productions. Each director selected in this section must submit proposals for his/her next film; proposal is taken into consideration when awards given. Festival format is 35mm; pre-selection for the Young Cinema Section may be on 16mm or 1/2". Contact: Kyushiro Kusakabe, program director, Organizing Committee, Tokyo International Film Festival, Asano Building No. 3, 2-4-19 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104, Japan; tel: 81-3-563-6304; telex: J34548; fax: 81-3-563-6310.

TYNESIDE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT CINEMA, Oct. 8-18, England. Director Fred Brookes sees fest as being at the heart of "the development of the germ of a vigorous & progressive media industry" in northeast England that will nourish the support of ind film. Last yr it featured films from 27 countries dealing w/ women's issues, workers' rights, nuclear debate, racism & the politics of Latin America. This year, its 10th anniversary, fest will focus on 2 specific

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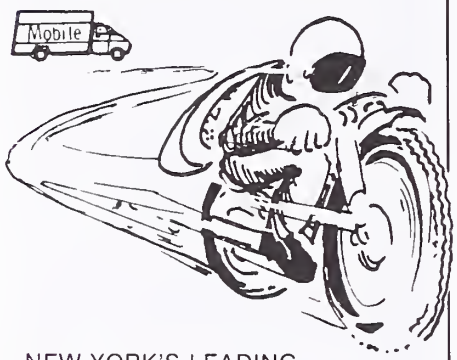
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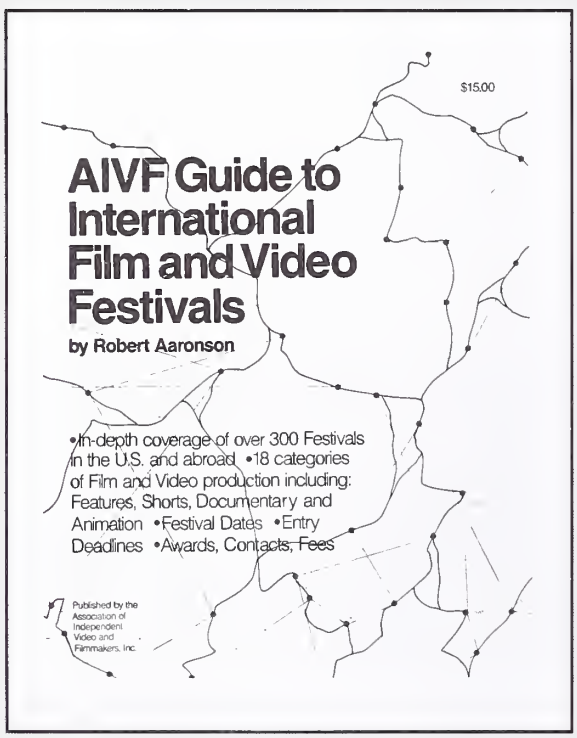
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sections: films & videos dealing w/ the gay/lesbian experience & works representative of Spain, Latin America, Central America & the Spanish-speaking world. Welcomes docs, shorts & films by new directors, w/ cash prizes totalling £7000 in features, short film, regional production & video cats. 1986 US selections included Bill Daughton's *Halloweenie*, Gus Van Sant's *Mala Noche*, Lucy Winer's *Silent Pioneers*, Guido Chiesa's *Black Harvest*, Alfred Guzzetti/Susan Meiselas/Richard Rogers' *Living at Risk: The Story of a Nicaraguan Family*; Trinh T. Minh-ha's *Naked Spaces—Living Is Round*, Arther J. Bressan's *Buddies*, David Riesenfeld's *Bopha!*, Bill Sherwood's *Parting Glances*, Marta Meszaro's *Ave Maria*, John Adams' *Intellectual Properties*, Nancy Kelly's *Cowgirls*, Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It* & David Sutherland's *Paul Cadmus: Enfant Terrible at 80*. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". No entry fee. Filmmakers are asked to give video copy of their work to the festival archive for noncommercial educational use. Fest goes on tour afterward to independent regional cinemas in Britain, w/ an exhibition fee paid to filmmakers. Deadline: June 27 (appl. forms), July 11 (preview tapes). Contact: Peter A. Packer, festival programmer, Tyneside Film Festival, 10 Pilgrim St., Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 6QG, England; tel: (091) 232-8289.

VARNA WORLD ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 3-9, Bulgaria. Biennial competitive event that alternates w/ Bulgaria's other major fests: Sofia World Film Festival for Children & Young People, Gabrovo Int'l Comedy Film Festival & Varna Red Cross Film Fest. Fest this yr will be held in Varna's new Festival Hall. Cats: animated films up to 5 min., 5-15 min. & over 15 min.; children's animated film (not in serial); film produced for TV serial; educational; & director's debut. No entry fee. Filmmaker responsible for round trip shipping & insurance charges. Top prizes in '85 went to *The Holy Innocents*, by Spain's Mario Camus & to USSR's Nikolay Gubenko for *Life Tears & Love*. Recognized by Int'l Assoc. of Animation Filmmakers. Prizes accompanied by cash awards. Films shown at Annecy or Zagreb not eligible. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: mid-July. Contact: Orlin Filipov, festival director, Fifth World Animation Festival, c/o International Film Festivals General Management, 1, Bulgaria Sq., 1414 Sofia, Bulgaria; tel: 589159; telex 22059 FESTIN BG.

VEVEY INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF COMEDY FILMS, August, Switzerland. Now in its 7th year, this festival features innovative humorous or ironic films. Jury in '86 included Hof Film Festival director Heinz Badewitz, Swiss film critic Alex Barringer, English film critic/historian Peter Cowie, Swedish producer Jorn Donner & MoMA curator Adrienne Mancia. US entries out of competition were Ron Howard's *Gung Ho*, Alan Alda's *Sweet Liberty* & Jim Jarmusch's *Down by Law*. A special retrospective section featured US filmmaker Charles Bowers; another retro included romantic films. 10 films selected for competition, plus 10-15 shorts. Prizes incl. Golden Vevey Cane for best feature film & for best actor/actress & possibly 2 special mentions. There are several awards for shorts. Films must be subtitled in French. Fest does not pay shipping or insurance. Film should be a Swiss premiere & should not have received any awards in other major fests unless it is to be shown in a nocompetitive section. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 1 (applications), Aug. 1 (prints). Contact: Iris Brose, director, 5 Pl. de la Gare, CH-1800 Vevey, Switzerland; tel: (021) 518282, telex: 451143.

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Ramona Rolle-Berg (left) and P.J. Gentry (right) in *Crescendo*, a story of domestic violence in Alaska.
Courtesy filmmaker

Renee Tajima

In chronicling African Americans' history, the turbulent sixties will be remembered as the second Emancipation. Music was a major contributor to the vitality that characterized that decade of struggle. "Freedom songs" adapted from church spirituals were heard amid fiery speeches, prayers, attack dogs, and water hoses—all striking across the soundscape of the southern civil rights movement. In the North, the anger on the streets emerged in the voice of the saxophone, drum, trombone, and trumpet. Their ancestral sound was the driving force of the free jazz school of urban improvisational music. This "spirit music" is explored in Doug Harris' long-awaited feature documentary **Speaking in Tongues**. Just as Afro-American jazz musicians have gained the recognition in Europe that eluded them at home, Harris went to the West German broadcaster ZDF for funding after being rejected by U.S. arts agencies. Now complete, *Speaking in Tongues* will be aired in Europe by ZDF and hopefully be brought home to U.S. audiences. *Speaking in Tongues*: Griot Productions, Box 1155, New York, NY 10027; (212) 222-9523.

Five of Copper Giloth's recent computer/video installations have been put on display at the Herter Art Gallery at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, in her exhibition **Narrative Information**. Giloth's work ranges from computer-driven pieces, in which images are drawn on a monitor by a program run on a personal computer, to video camera images. *Clothes Hangers*, a three-minute program run by an Amiga computer, is set on a fluted white column in the middle of a projected image of the Supreme Court. As the fluidly drawn images succeed one another, a captioned narrative details the many uses of coat hangers. In *Halloween*, video images of a carved pumpkin glow from a darkened room to reveal a sinister undercurrent of a childhood Halloween memory. Throughout the five pieces, Giloth creates an interplay between the simple and the complex—via narrative viewpoint and in the images and the technologies that produce this. *Narrative Information*: Herter Art Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003; (413) 545-1902.

The Astoria, New York, animator Marie Plagianos has recently completed **Peace**, a short film that blends animation with live action in equal parts. Plagianos first conceived the idea for *Peace* while a student at the School of Visual Arts in New York City. The story is based on a play written by Aristophanes during the Peloponesian War. Says Plagiano, "I wanted the theme to center on peace without showing war, and I wanted children to be able to view the film without being afraid." *Peace* has been selected to represent the U.S. in Oslo, Norway, and has screened in a theatrical run at the Cinema 3 Theater in New York City. *Peace*: Joel Garrick, School of Visual Arts, 209 E. 23rd St., New York, NY 10010; (212) 679-7350, ext. 314.

The 10-minute short film **Iluminada** has recently been completed with funds from the New York State Council on the Arts. Roberta Cantow conceived, shot, and edited this abstract rendition of Mexico, which she describes as "a visual impression, a subjective response in image and sound without text." Cantow sought to capture the Mexican landscape from the point of view of varying levels of reality to shape a "song of the soul." *Iluminada*: Roberta Cantow, 136 W. 87th St. #7, New York, NY 10024; (212) 874-7255.

A partnership of Alaskan independents and community groups formed the basis for the production of **Crescendo**, a 25-minute dramatic film about domestic violence. Writer-director Mary Katzke of Affinityfilms just completed principal photography in Anchorage, with an all-Alaskan crew and cast. *Crescendo* tells the story of two families: the Adams, a loving couple who are planning the arrival of their first child, and their next-door neighbors, the Stewarts, whose intensifying violence can be heard through the townhouse wall. The Adams' efforts to help their neighbors break the cycle of abuse is used to highlight community services and support that are available to both the victims and perpetrators of violence in the home. Affinityfilms coproduced *Crescendo* with the Anchorage Abused Women's Aid in Crisis Center and received additional support from the Rotary Club and Duty Free Shoppers. *Crescendo*: Affinityfilms, Box 2974, Anchorage, AL 99510; (907) 274-0466.

The irrepressible cable collective **Paper Tiger TV** is now in midseason with its Winter/Spring '87 schedule on New York's Group W and Manhattan Cable public access channels. The primetime series presents weekly critiques of the visual and print media. Already this year, *Paper Tiger* has "invaded *Amerika*" and "scanned the (Inter)National Audio/Video Festival" in Hollywood. In coming weeks, *Paper Tiger* promises Jill Macoska reading *Popular Science* magazine; Maria Manhattan and Betsy Newman reading *W*, and *The Parents of the Damned: The (Anti)Nuclear Millner/Larsen Clan Reading Parents Magazine*. *Paper Tiger TV*: 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012; (212) 420-9045.

Videomaker Ilan Ziv has completed **Shrine under Siege**, a documentary on the unusual coalition of U.S. fundamentalist Christians and militant Israeli Jews who plot to destroy one of Islam's holiest shrines. The site of the Mosque, the Dome of the Rock, is holy to Jews and Arabs alike since it rests above the ruins of the last central Temple destroyed by the

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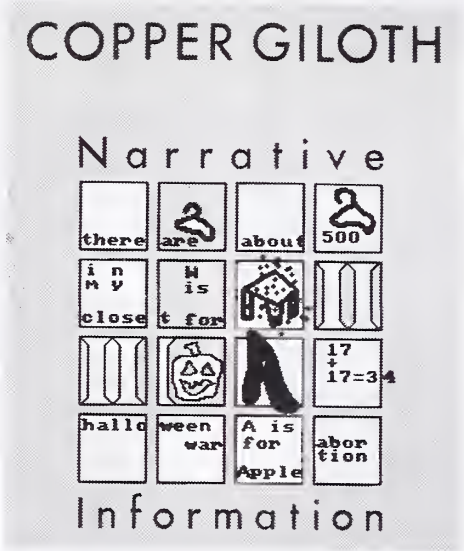
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Romans. The Israeli extremists would like to destroy the Mosque and build another Temple, as a fulfillment of a messianic Biblical prophecy. These "religious terrorists," who have resorted to violent tactics, have allied themselves with fundamentalist Christians who share the same messianic vision. Ziv explores the complex theological and political issues implicit in this alliance. *Shrine under Siege* premiered at the Global Village Endangered Documentary series in New York. *Shrine under Siege*: Ilan Ziv, 123 W. 93rd St., New York, NY; (212) 864-7603.

Filmmaker Michael Camerini and sociologist James Ault have completed a feature-length documentary entitled **Baptist Church**, an intimate portrait of a fundamentalist community in central Massachusetts. The film explores the power of this distinctly U.S. religious tradition and "the New Right" politics associated with it through the lives of ordinary believers who wrestle with basic human problems within their community of faith. There is the betrayal and loss of a broken family, the conflict and alienation of marriage, and teenage rebellion in the church's "Christian Academy." The filmmakers spent over six months filming on location around the Shamut Valley, capitalizing on the trust and access Ault already built during two years of sociological research prior to shooting. *Baptist Church*: Shamut Valley Baptist Church Project, Five Colleges, Box 740, Amherst, MA 01004; (413) 256-8316.

Gary Hill has completed a five-channel video installation entitled **Crux (1983-1987)**, a kind of absentee performance piece for the stage and accompanying spoken text. According to Hill: "The 'performer' is seen as a composite video image. The head, hands, and feet are separately framed on five monitors suspended from the ceiling which are arranged in such a way as to suggest a number of icons: a crucifixion, a robot, a puppet, or perhaps Da Vinci's *Proportions of the Human Figure*." The piece was commissioned by curator Julie Lazar at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art for its year-long inaugural exhibition program. *Crux* was installed in the museum's Ahmanson Auditorium from January through March earlier this year. *Crux (1983-1987):* Museum of Contemporary Art, 250 S. Grand Ave. at California Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90012; (213) 621-2766.

Inter Nationes, the German translation agency, has commissioned Richard Kostelanetz and German filmmaker Martin Koerber to produce additional Spanish and Hebrew versions of **A Berlin Lost**, their 1985 film about the great Jewish cemetary of Berlin. In previous versions, the filmmakers decided that instead of subtitling the film or overdubbing the original German voices, they would compose a new audio track, based on ex-Berliners who speak English, French, and Swedish. The result was a series of very distinct films with varying emphases, even



Copper Giloth's video installation, *Narrative Information*, debuted at the Herter Art Gallery at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

though they shared a common visual track. The same strategy will be used in the Yiddish and Dutch versions, yet to be made. *A Berlin Lost:* Richard Kostelanetz, Box 444, Prince St., New York, NY 10012; (212) 982-3099.

It is estimated that there are eight to 10 million children of gay and lesbian parents in the United States. Yet, because of the prejudice against homosexuality in our society, these families remain secret. San Francisco-based filmmakers Kevin White and Annamarie Faro have completed a one-hour film **Not All Parents Are Straight**, which examines the lives of these families and the challenges they confront. Through interviews with children and their parents, the documentary looks at the emotional conflicts within the family, legal custody problems, and the social discrimination that both parent and child face. *Not All Parents Are Straight:* Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, New York, NY 10019; (212) 246-5522.

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CLASSIFIEDS

The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy ○ Rent ○ Sell," "Freelancers" & "Postproduction" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$15 per issue.** Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double- spaced & worded exactly as it should appear.

Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., May 8 for the July issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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FOR SALE: JVC KY-2700A color camera, includes travel case, 14 to 1 Fujinon lens, AC adaptor, camera battery with charger, camera plate & instruction manual. Excellent condition. Must sell. $2,500 or best offer. Call (212) 662-3332.

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FOR SALE: Eclair ACL 16mm camera with crystal synch motor, two 200' magazines, 12-volt battery, Zeiss 10-100 zoom lens & Miller fluid head tripod, all lightly used & in excellent condition. $3,000. (212) 866-7625.

FOR SALE: 6-plate Moviola flatbed 86A editing table w/ torque box. Light use. Excellent condition. $4,000. 2 Rivas 16mm straight cut splicers, 2 Moviscope viewers, Moviola rewinds, 2 16mm synchronizers, Magnasync soundreader. (212) 866-7625.

FOR RENT: 3 furnished offices including editing room, hi-floor, share terrace overlooking Greenwich Village, share conference/screening room, copying machine. $950/mo., min. 6 mos, avail. immediately. Louise (212) 206-1213 (10-6) or leave message on machine.

FOR SALE: 6-plate Moviola flatbed editing machine (16mm) in good condition with new transformer. $4,600 or best offer. Louise (212) 206-1213 (10-6) or leave message on machine.

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INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS: seeking video/film documentaries for national/international distribution; historical, social, ethnic, cultural & children's themes about the American West. Onewest Media, P.O. Box 5766, Santa Fe, NM 87502, (505) 983-8685.

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NEGATIVE MATCHING: 16mm, super 16, 35mm cut for regular printing, blowup, or video transfer. Credits include Jim Jarmusch, Wim Wenders & Yvonne Rainer. Reliable results at reasonable rates. One White Glove, Tim Brennan (718) 897–4145, NYC.

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NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length. Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., May 8 for the July issue. Send notices to Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences ○ Workshops

4TH ANNUAL NEW JERSEY VIDEO & FILM FESTIVAL Conference "Media Makers: Visions & Realities" will be held May 15, 9-4:30 pm at the Newark Airport Marriott Hotel. Workshops incl. "Video Art: Another Canvas," "Distribution of Independent Work," "Funding" & video installation by Paper Tiger TV. Registration $45 in advance; $35 for members of the New Jersey Media Artists Network in advance; $60 for all at the door. Contact: Dana Kenney, Newark Mediaworks, Box 1716, Newark, NJ 07101; (201) 690-5474.

WEAVING WOMEN'S COLORS: A Decade of Empowerment: 10th annual conference of the National Women's Studies Assn., Spelman College, Agnes Scott College & Emory Univ., June 24-28 at Spelman College. Plenaries, workshops & media presentations on intersection of race & gender in various areas of empowerment, focus on women of color. Incl. film & video screenings, open screenings & film library. Contact: NWSA '87, Emory Univ., Box 21223, Atlanta, GA 30322; (404) 727-7845.

VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP SUMMER INSTITUTE: Classes in photography, theory & criticism, video, printing & book arts from June 29-Aug. 14. College credit available through SUNY Brockport. For catalogue, write Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince St., Rochester, NY 14607; (716) 442-8676.

FRENCH-AMERICAN FILM WORKSHOP: 3-week summer study course will take place in Avignon, France, June 15-July 6. Intensive survey of 20th century French & Amer. independent cinema. 3rd week of course coincides w/ "Recontres Cinematographiques Franco-Americaines," an int'l forum for film professionals from both countries. Contact: French American Film Workshop, 23 rue de la Republique, 84000 Avignon, France; Tel. 90.85.50.98, Telex *432877.*

UNIVERSITY FILM & VIDEO ASSN: 41st annual conference to be held Aug. 3-7 at Loyola Marymount Univ. in Los Angeles. Topics incl. interface of film & video prod. in teaching, use of computers in film & video, issues of preservation & restoration of film & video. Contact: Dana Driskel, UFVA Conference Program Coordinator, Film Studies Program, U.C. Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA 93106.

Films ○ Tapes Wanted

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE is looking for features, shorts, docs & videos w/ distinct American regional flavor, for major retrospective in May '88. Send preview prints, written material, or contact by phone: David Schwartz, American Museum of the Moving Image, 34-12 36th St., Astoria, NY 11106; (718) 784-4520.

THE CINEMA GUILD seeks film & video programs suitable for release through its new home video division. Contact: Gary Crowdus, Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, New York, NY 10019; (212) 246-5522.

UCVIDEO seeks new works by independents in these areas: women's issues, performing arts, politics & government, Native American issues, fine arts, literature & social issues. Contact: Odessa Flores, distribution director, UCVideo, 425 Ontario St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 627-4444.

Opportunities ○ Gigs

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Publications ○ Software

TEXAS FILM/TAPE DIRECTORY: Now available from the Texas Assn. of Film/Tape Professionals. 11th edition features comprehensive roster of freelance film & video production personnel & industry support services in Texas. Contact: TAF/TP, 3023 Routh St., Dallas, TX 75201; (214) 871-2701.

BRITISH FILM CATALOGUE: 1895-1985: Guide to British film by Denis Gifford now available. Standard reference work w/ over 1,500 new entries. Price: $75 hardbound. Contact: Facts on File, 460 Park Ave. S., New York, NY 10016; (212) 683-2244.

TELECOM ACTION NEWS: Now replaces *Access* as the source of definitive news & analysis on telecommunication issues from the public interest perspective. Published by Telecommunications Research & Action Center. Contact: TRAC, Box 12038, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 462-2520.

Resources ○ Funds

MEDIA GRANTS for social issue media projects will be administered through Paul Robeson Fund for Film & Video of the Funding Exchange. Deadline: May 1. Write Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

NAT'L ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS: National Services application deadline: May 8. Contact: NEA Media Arts Program; (202) 682-5452. Advancement Grants in the Media Arts, deadline May 7 for letter of intent to apply; application deadline June 4. Contact: Advancement Grant Program; (202) 682-5436. NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20506.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING: Open Solicitations deadline: May 1. Contact: CPB, Program Fund, 1111 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036.

FILM BUREAU: Grants avail. to nonprofit NYS-based organizations for film exhibition programs. Supports wide variety of programs, from annual film fests to special screenings at local libraries, galleries & community centers. Matching funds of up to $300 avail. for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Priority given to organizations showing works by independent filmmakers &/or films not ordinarily avail. to the public. Deadlines: June 15, Aug. 15., Jan. 15. Contact: Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

PHILADELPHIA INDEPENDENT FILM/VIDEO ASSN. subsidy grants avail. to members of PIFVA; funds provided by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. Funds awarded for specific, targeted services vital to the project's completion, performed at below commercial rates. Average grants $250-500. Deadline: June 1. For apps, contact PIFVA, Int'l House, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 387-5125.

VIDEO SERVICES GRANTS TO NEW YORK STATE COMPOSERS: Awards to 6 New York State composers for access to professional television production & editing facilities at the Inter-Media Art Center in Huntington, NY. Deadline: May 1. Contact: IMAC, 370 New York Ave., Huntington, NY 11743; (516) 549-9666.

NEW YORK COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES: Proposal deadline: June 1. Contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, 10th fl., New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

VISUAL ARTS RESIDENCY PROGRAM: Sponsored by Mid Atlantic States Arts Consortium, supports organizations that host residencies of 2 wks-3 months by individual artists, arts organization staff members or critics & curators. Nonprofits located in DE., DC, MD, NJ, NY, PA, VA & WV. Application deadline: July 15. Contact: Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Box 7467, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

NAT'L ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Challenge Grants application deadline: May 1. Contact: Challenge Grants Guidelines, Rm 409, Public Affairs Office, NEH, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20506.

HALLWALLS GALLERY will award 6-9 grants of $2,500-4,000 to artists working in interdisciplinary or collaborative fashion. Artists in upstate NY, eastern OH, western PA & WV are eligible. Deadline: May 7. Contact: Steve Griffith, Hallwalls, 700 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

Trims & Glitches

KUDOS to winners of the Film Arts Foundation film & video grants: Ardath Grant for *No One Is Home*; Marek Pacholec, *Witches*; Nancy Kelly, *No Life for a Lady* & Eric Marin, *Cows under the Pepper Tree*.

KUDOS to University Community Video which has been awarded a $45,000 grant from the Bush Foundation.

CONGRATULATIONS Mickey Siporin, whose film *The Blink-O-Rama Theatre* received 1st prize from the Jury of Youth at the Int'l Festival of Cinema for Children & Youth.

KUDOS to AIVF members who received coveted Academy Award nominations: Amram Nowak for *Isaac in America* & Sharon 1. Sopher, *Witness to Apartheid* (best documentary feature); Sonya Friedman, *The Masters of Disaster* & Vivienne Verdon-Roe, *Women—For America, For the World* (best documentary short); Fredda Weiss, *Love Struck* & Chuck Workman, *Precious Images* (best live action short); Jerry Pantzer, *Masters of Disaster & Isaac in America* (cinematography); Peter Schnall, DP on *Chile: Hasta Cuando?* (best feature documentary).

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DAS BOOTH

For this year's Berlin International Film Festival, AIVF teamed up with the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) to organize a booth for independent U.S. producers invited to participate in the festival's two noncompetitive sections. This was the first time that information on U.S. independents had been centralized and coordinated in this fashion, comparable to the distributors' and national film boards' booths representing other countries' productions.

The need for a U.S. independents' booth became apparent to Lynda Hansen, director of NYFA's New Works program, during last year's festival. She and Robert Aaronson, then AIVF festival bureau director and now assistant director of New Works at NYFA, began to discuss the possibility of AIVF and NYFA collaborating on such a booth. After getting a positive response to the idea from both filmmakers and the festival directors, they and AIVF executive director Lawrence Sapadin put the idea in motion and began approaching media organizations for cosponsorship.

"There's no question the booth was successful in terms of generating interest and getting information out," says Kathryn Bowser, AIVF'S festival bureau director, who staffed the booth together with Hansen, Aaronson, and liaison Ursula Rapp of the Munich Film Festival. "Ours seemed the most hectic of the market's booths. It was three-people deep all the time."

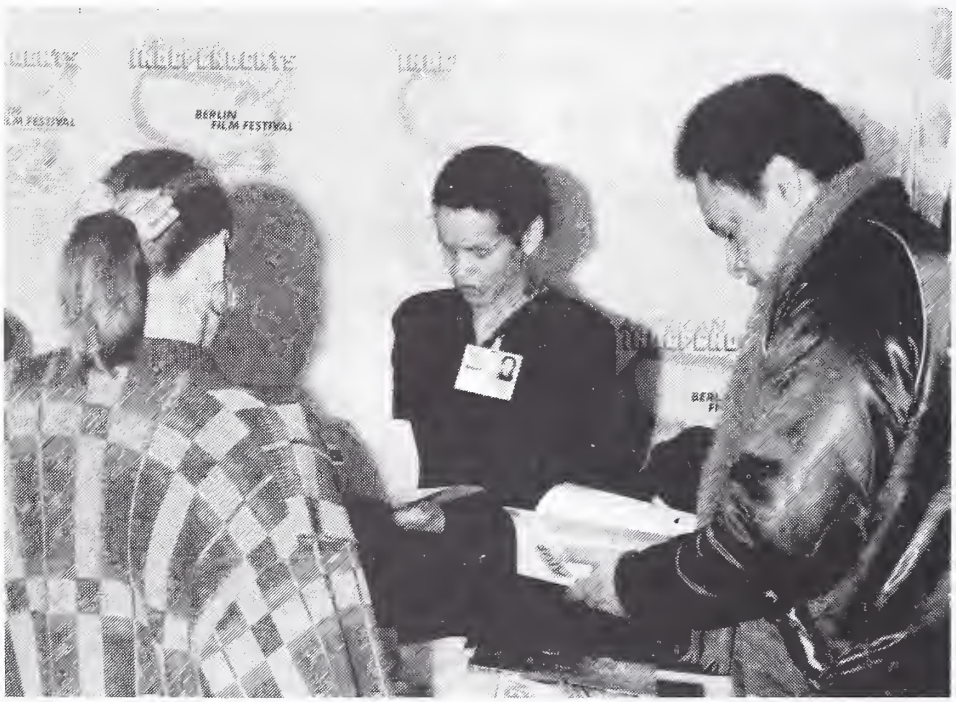
In addition to distributing a 32-page catalogue describing the more than 30 invited films and videotapes, the booth also made available literature from the 26 sponsoring organizations—a mix of media arts centers, distributors, exhibitors, funders, and membership organizations.

To further showcase U.S. independent productions, AIVF and NYFA also organized market screenings and press conferences for each of the noncompetitive entries. Says Aaronson, "In the past, filmmakers and agents booked market screenings as they saw fit. This was the first time all the films were booked together at the market in advance of the festival, so they could appear in the market catalogue." The market screenings were attended by distributors, buyers, and the international press.

A number of programming and distribution deals resulted from these screenings. Swiss, Icelandic, and Portuguese TV reps expressed interest in Barbara Margolis' *Are We Winning the War, Mommy? America and the Cold War*. Tina Difeliciantonio's *Living with AIDS* was bought by Swedish TV and acquired by Cactus Films, a Swiss distributor. Marc Huestis began negotiations with the German channel ZDF about rights to *Chuck Solomon: Coming of Age*, which will also play theatrically in London and at the Toronto Film Festival as a result of contacts made at the Berlin festival. The German distributors OKO-Film and Arsenal picked up some films, including Beth B's *Salvation: Have You Said Your Prayers Today?* and works by D.A. Pennebaker. Doris Chase, Rachid Kerdouche, and Guido Chiesa are among those still in negotiations begun in Berlin. In addition to television and theatrical distribution opportunities, the Berlin market also opened doors to other film festivals. Various producers received invitations from the American Film Instititute, Edinburgh, Toronto, Venice, and Jerusalem film festivals.

The enthusiastic response to the booth practically assures its continuation at next year's Berlin Film Festival. And there is the possibility of similar efforts elsewhere.

PATRICIA THOMSON



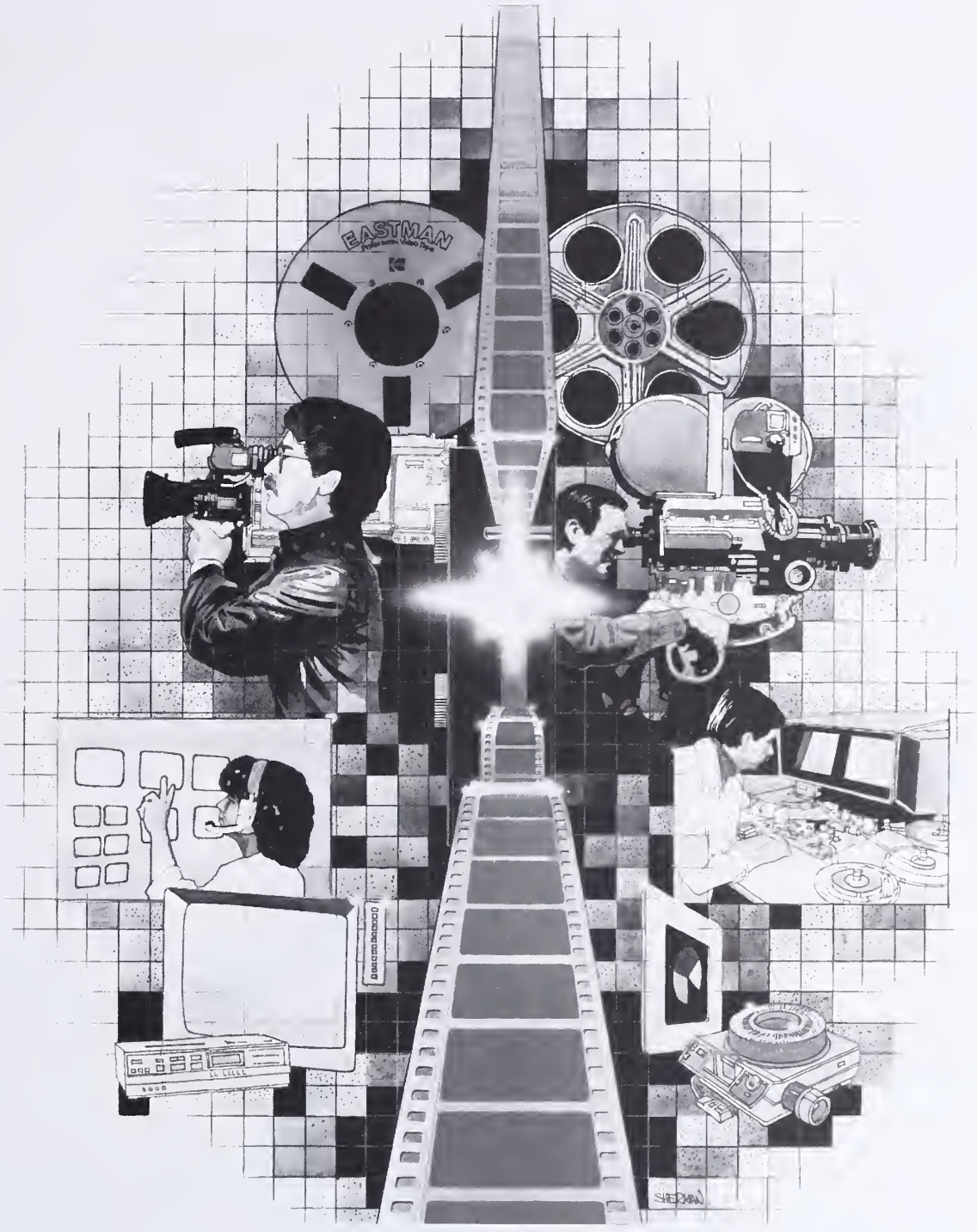
The combined NYFA/AIVF booth at the Berlin Film Festival gave U.S. independent film- and videomakers a shot at market leverage.

Photo: Ekko von Schwichow

AIVF/FIVF THANKS

The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film provide a variety of programs and services to the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, the FIVF Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearinghouse. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, organizations, and individuals:

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Have You Entered Yet?

In early April The Learning Channel announced a new solicitation for a television series showcasing fictional works by independent film/video artists. If you didn't receive an announcement, check with your local or regional media arts center or telephone Caroline at (202) 331-8100.

The series will premiere on TLC in October and will include about 20-25 works in 13 hour-long programs. Your entries are encouraged but must be accompanied by the official entry forms (or a photocopy of the forms) found in the announcement flyer. The deadline for submissions is May 15, 1987 (no extensions will be granted).

Also, check your local cable listings for Declarations of Independents, now airing on TLC.





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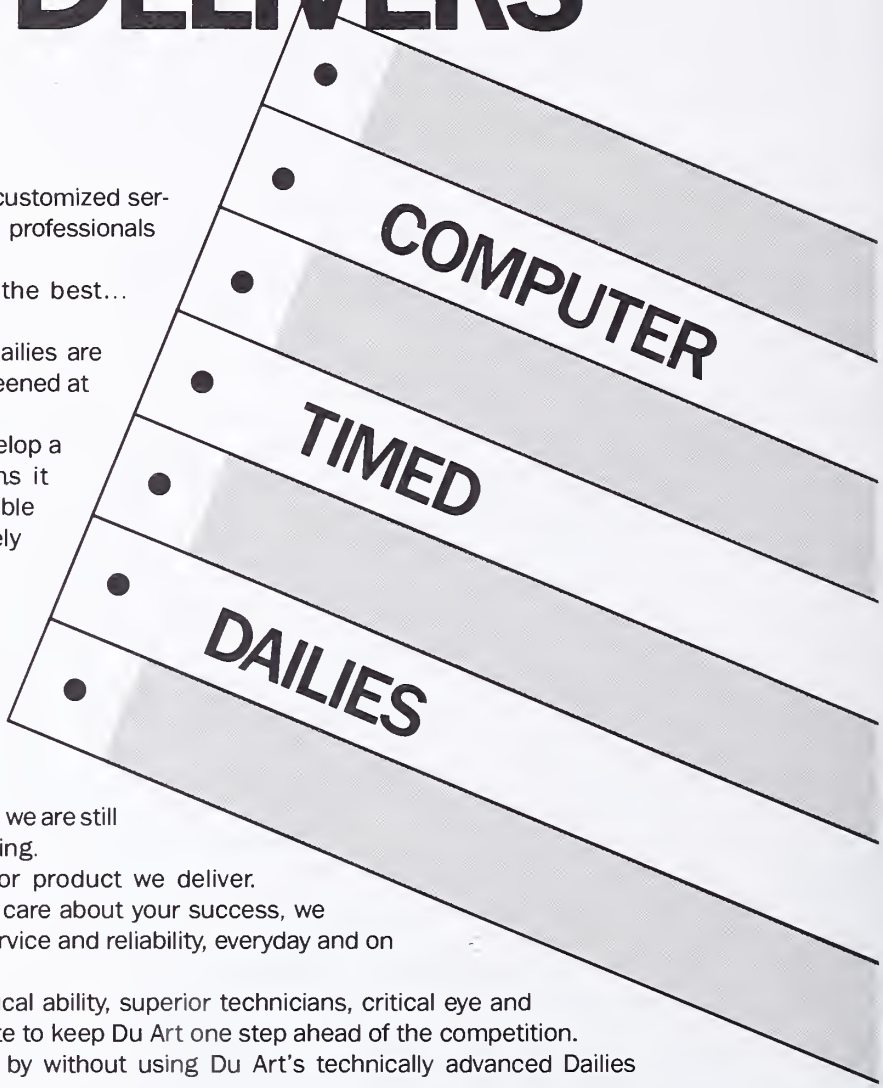
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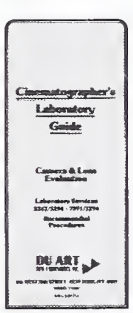
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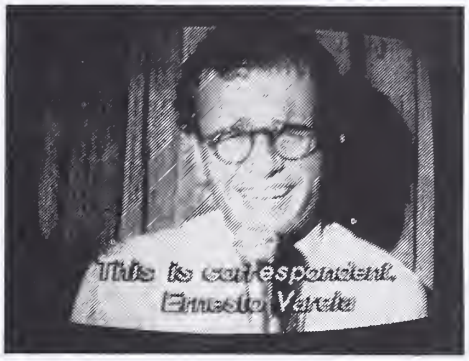
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COVER: Stephen Penney, the protagonist in John Paizs' *Crime Wave*, contemplates The Canadian Dilemma: a distinctive cultural voice that is convinced it has no cultural voice and a national condition of alienation. In "The Outsider's Aesthetic: Contemporary Independent Film in Canada" Geoff Pevere looks at how feature filmmakers are making works which comment on this chronic cultural detachment.

LETTERS

PRESERVATION PRESSURES

To the editor:

I would like to officially respond to Edward Ball's article, "The Good, the Bad, the Forgettable," in the March issue of *The Independent*, especially to his erroneous and unfair contention that American film archives are in cahoots with the cinema industries' establishment and that they willingly exclude independent work. Nothing could be further from the truth.

It is true that much independent work has not been archived, and that film archivists are at the mercy of economic forces in the marketplace, but not in quite the way that Ball suggests. Film preservation is an extremely expensive proposition. At present, the George Eastman House alone holds more than eight million feet of nitrate film which is still unprotected and unpreserved. The funds received from the NEA and NYSCA for nitrate preservation allow for the transferral to acetate stock of, at best, 10 to 20 films a year. At this rate American archives with nitrate holdings will still be working on preservation well into the twenty-first century—if indeed any nitrate survives that long. Up to now government granting agencies have more or less refused to fund either video or acetate film preservation. From the private sector, whether Hollywood or independents, we cannot expect any financial help whatsoever. We are literally caught in vicious circle, while our nitrate continues to deteriorate.

As far as our acquisitions policy is concerned, George Eastman House and the other national film collections certainly evolved historically from the tastes of their earliest curators. Thus, the GEH collection is very much a product of the efforts of its first director, James Card, just as MoMA's collection reflects Iris Barry. At the same time, it must be noted that neither Card nor subsequent curators have ever turned down a donation. Eastman House owns Hollywood films, as well as foreign titles, documentary films and newsreels, independent work, as well as a substantial amount of virtually anonymous amateur footage.

We welcome all donations; we encourage deposits and/or permanent loans. In fact, this is one way film archives and independents can truly help one another. We offer free storage space to all filmmakers for their negatives or other pre-print materials. Given the extreme expense of storage at commercial laboratories, savings to the filmmaker could be substantial. Most archives, including GEH, will also guarantee both ready access and complete security from pirating. What do film archives ask in return? The chance to produce archive materials at some later date, possibly a reference print for internal use, i.e., for researchers, students, etc. All rights remain with the owner; any usage of material is contingent on approval by the owner.

Film archivists consider this quite an equitable quid pro quo, yet few filmmakers take advantage of this opportunity, probably because they are not aware of these facts. Ball can thus rightly accuse film archivists of not communicating adequately. However, as Frederick Wiseman (who to my knowledge has never belonged to the Hollywood establishment) can attest, since he recently decided to deposit all his material at GEH, film archivists have not actively conspired against independents.

As far as the establishment of an official canon is concerned, film archives have been the least likely to "follow marketplace trends in their collection habits." Silent films, of which almost 80 percent have disappeared, would have become extinct had the archives followed market trends. That a revisionist history of cinema is today possible—pointing towards all those films not included in the canon from Griffith to Ford to Coppola, films by black independents, films by "amateurs" like James Sibley Watson, films by women like Lois Weber, films produced regionally in Florida or Maine—is due to the efforts of this country's film archives. Where would the New American Cinema be today, had not Anthology Film Archives come into being?

If Ball is looking for a scapegoat, he should look elsewhere. Why is it that the U.S. government can supposedly afford trillions of dollars for defense, but only a pittance for nitrate and acetate film preservation, when the cost of preservation for all of America's nitrate would be substantially less than a single MX missile? Why have American film corporations—until very recently, when they discovered the video value of old movies—periodically and systematically destroyed their films? Why must film archives be chronically understaffed and underfunded? Ball would have been doing independents a greater service had he answered these questions, rather than constructing a cheap shot for himself.

—Jan-Christopher Horak
associate curator/film, International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Rochester, NY

Edward Ball replies:

To Jan-Christopher Horak's excellent but quaint question to me about why the federal government buys bombs rather than triacetate dupes of nitrate-based silent film classics, I am sorry to say that I don't have an easy answer, or at least, I have no answer that would be appropriate for this publication. Perhaps he and I can get togehter with experts on national security who will settle the matter for both of us. In the meantime, I would like to address Horak's criticisms.

Independent film and videomakers are among the first who will testify to the existence of a cultural hegemony (of film genres, formal choices, etc.) that influences their financing and production decisions. That same hegemony—which fortunately is always being contested and modified—also monitors the collection decisions of film and television archives. Unless every film in the history of cinema is placed in a vault and preserved (an absurd proposition), film archives must collect and maintain their materials selectively, or according to a set of identifiable values. The process is both conscious ("Yes, we want both John Wayne and Dada films") and unconscious, that is guided by economic determinants and dominant ideology ("A major studio want us to house its bank of Cold War epics —why not?"). Nowhere in my article did I suggest that "film archives are in cahoots with the cinema establishment," as Horak claims, and whose profession I never intended to impugn. And neither did I suggest that film archivists consciously exclude independents from collections that they manage. I did want to point out, however, that film archives participate in the ongoing war over society's memory of its own culture. The following tale supports this modest (and, to me, obvious) claim, while its drama brings to light the usually anonymous profession of the archivist, who typically works out of sight of audiences and critics.

The patron saint of film archivists, Henri Langlois, founder of both the venerable Cinémathèque Francais (in 1935) and the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film (FIAF, in 1938)—two cornerstone institutions in the edifice of film memory—was an obsessive cinéphile who spent most of his life collecting and screening films. During the wartime occupation of Paris, when the German command attempted to remake French culture in the image of fascist ideology, in part by seizing and destroying unacceptable films, Langlois managed to safeguard thousands of prints from the official purge, a feat for which he was lionized in France after the war. Interestingly, Langlois was helped in his salvage efforts by a sympathetic Nazi officer, one Frank Hensel, who intervened periodically to block certain seizures of films and who himself was none other than the first president of FIAF (still the leading professional association of film archives). The connection with the fascist Hensel was expedient to Langlois' only concern, the protection of films, and does not, of course, implicate Langlois as a collaborationist (indeed, he was later widely praised as a kind of above-ground member of the Resistance). After the war, Langlois went on to become a lifelong and somewhat paranoid defender of the mountainous Cinématèque Francais collection that he built, a body of films that he always perceived to be under some threat from ideological inquisitors both within and outside the French government. When Langlois was awarded a special Oscar in 1974, Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, called him "the consience of the cinema"

The story of Langlois (which may be read in detail in Richard Roud's 1983 biography, *A Passion for Films*) demonstrates that archivists can never be neutral, disinterested benefactors of the cinema, but are always agents engaged on behalf of some set of values in a historical and political context. In occupied Paris, Langlois defended an ecumenical view of film history in an atmosphere of censorship. Today, when ideological pressures are no less present, but merely less visible, the choices of archives reflect prejudices. For example, the preservation of nitrate prints with which Horak is so concerned (and, which is, in its way, an important project) is a chosen priority to which the George Eastman House archive has devoted considerable efforts over other priorities (hanging onto the old cinema versus seeking out and buying the new, etc.). Langlois' work to save films during the war, his particular consort with a fascist to carry out this goal, and the current position of archives in the United States, where the myth of tolerance hides more complicated agendas of permitted filmmaking—these features emphasize how archivists work within a complex system of cultural hegemony, reinforcing it or dismantling it, conscious or not, however else they see their role.



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DAWNING HOPES AND SUNSETS FOR MUST-CARRY

Responding to Congressional pressure, the Federal Communications Commission on March 26 approved a new version of the must-carry rules governing cable's carriage of local broadcast signals. Must-carry had been suspended since July 1985, following a federal appeals court decision in a case brought by Quincy Cable TV that carriage requirements violated cable operators' freedom of speech. [See "Must-Carry to Go: Court Declares Rule Unconstitutional," October 1985.] The original must-carry rules, in effect for 20 years, required that all local broadcast signals be carried by cable operators. A revised version, with more limited carriage requirements, was to have gone into effect on January 15, 1987, but was unexpectedly held up at the last minute by the FCC. The recent FCC announcement alleviates industry fears that the FCC might stonewall the must-carry rules indefinitely, even after a series of compromises had been reached and agreed to since the 1985 *Quincy* case. But the newest version of must-carry leaves many affected parties dissatisfied, particularly the independent and public television stations that have been hurt most by the deregulatory changes.

Over 150 public television stations have been dropped since must-carry was eliminated two years ago. Many others have been shifted to higher, less watched locations on the channel line-up, their old spots usually being given to pay or former pay services, advertising-supported cable channels, or programming in which the cable operators have equity interest. Independent stations, which are more likely than network affiliates to be minority-owned, have also suffered from drops and channel realignments. Cable's reshuffling of channel line-ups picked up speed beginning in November 1986, when cable operators stepped up preparations for the deregulation of their basic subscription rates on January 1, 1987, as stipulated in the 1984 Cable Act. The realignments reached the point where both the president of the National Cable Television Association and Edward Markey (D-Massachusetts), chair of the House Telecommunications Subcommittee, had to warn cable operators not to go overboard with excessive switching or wholesale dumping, or they could expect political trouble—i.e., re-regulation.

The FCC's new must-carry rules were modeled after a version of must-carry drawn up in early 1986, following *Quincy*, by five cable and broadcasting trade associations. The National Association of Broadcasters, the Community Antenna Television Association, the National Cable Television Association, the Television Operators Caucus, and the Association of Independent Television Stations took on the task of writing carriage regulations themselves, since the FCC refused to do so and also refused to appeal the *Quincy* decision to the Supreme Court. During their marriage of convenience, the broadcast and cable industries hammered out a compromise. Cable, the victor in *Quincy*, agreed to reinstitute limited must-carry regulations if the broadcast industry would grant it some important political concessions—namely, that broadcasters recognize cable as an equal, not ancillary, delivery system; that broadcasters not press Congress or the FCC to get rid of the compulsory license rule (which enables cable operators to retransmit broadcast signals in exchange for federally set copyright fees, rather than bid for programs in the market); and that broadcasters keep out of the battle between Hollywood and cable over copyright.

The industry compromise scaled back carriage requirements from all local broadcast stations to a limited number determined by the individual cable system's channel capacity. Specific requirements regarding public television's carriage were not included. (Neither the Public Broadcasting Service, the National Association of Public Television Stations, nor the National Coalition for Minority Broadcasters were invited to the inter-industry sessions to discuss the must-carry compromise.) When the FCC reworked the industry document into its first revised version of must-carry (approved August 1986 and issued in writing in November), it did introduce limited protection for public television. Systems with fewer than 54 channels were to carry one public television station, and those with 54 or more must carry at least two, if available. This must-carry provision for public television stands as is in the latest version, despite the lobbying efforts of NAPTS for carriage of all public television stations. The new must-carry rules will go into effect 30 days after their appearance in the *Federal Register*.

The new rules also retain the "sunset provision," relieving cable operators of all carriage requirements after five years. Thus, in 1992, cable operators will be free to carry or drop any stations they choose. As a way of protecting new or smaller independents stations from exclusion, not to mention public television, the FCC came up with the idea of requiring cable operators to provide and install input or A/B switches for all subscribers. These switches would allow viewers to flip back and forth between cable and over-air reception. According to the FCC's reasoning, five years would be enough time to educate consumers about A/B switches, and carriage regulation after this period would be unnecessary.

The A/B switch, along with the five-year sunset, was not in the inter-industry compromise and had few supporters outside the FCC. Both the cable and broadcast industries disparaged it on technical, practical, and financial grounds. Nonetheless, the FCC retained the A/B switch in its latest must-carry document. It made one significant change, however, which was to allow cable operators to charge whatever they wish for such switches. The consumer, rather than the cable companies, will be absorbing the projected $1.4-billion in costs.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting acting president Donald Ledwig quickly criticized the FCC's new rules, saying, "The FCC continues to believe that A/B switches...are a solution to must-carry for public television. Even where the switch would be helpful, it is no solution to let the cable operator charge an arm and a leg for the switches and their installation. And it is no solution at all for those who cannot get a clear over-the-air signal." In a more pointed statement to *Current*, NAPTS president Peter Fannon said, "The people of this country deserve better than this twisted rule and perverted reasoning. We strongly urge everyone to ask the Congress to get the facts and to act to protect the future of public television."

In all likelihood, the FCC's must-carry document will not be the last word on the issue. While commercial and public broadcasting are anxious for carriage protection as soon as possible, they also plan to fight must-carry's sunset provision and A/B switch option. NAB president Eddie Fritts said, "The sunset was not part of the industry compromise, and is something we vow will never happen." The Association of Independent Television Stations issued a statement saying, "There is simply no justification, reason or excuse for sunsetting these rules in five years." Deploring cables' "numerous anticompetitive tactics," INTV said that in light of "such lucrative subsidies as compulsory license, the only reasonable public policy toward this unregulated monopoly has to be some minimal level of regulation."

Any efforts by the industry trade groups to lobby against the revisions will most likely be backed by key Congressional figures. Markey, who called the revised rules "outrageous," stated in a speech to the NAB, "I have no doubt there is no support for this in Congress." He also warned that the FCC's "dogmatism might drive Congress to legislate." A special

hearing on must-carry in Markey's subcommittee is likely. In addition, when the FCC appears before the Senate Communications Subcommittee in April for its authorization hearing, the must-carry revision is bound to be on the agenda.

The first serious challenge to the new must-carry rules will probably occur in the courts. Several cable companies and Turner Broadcasting System, who would like to see any form of must-carry abolished as unconstitutional, are seeking a court stay of must-carry's implementation. They are being represented by the same law firm that represented Quincy Cable TV in 1985. If they are successful, must-carry could be hung up for the next two to three years, during the court reviews. NAPTS's vice president and general counsel, Baryn Futa, believes that a stay is likely. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia—the same court that decided *Quincy*—will be considering the request. While the panel of judges might well be different than that in *Quincy*, Futa notes that "the D.C. Circuit has a track record of being fairly broad or generous in what it perceives as First Amendment protection." This points to a decision favorable to cable. Futa does not expect to see any definite action on this for some time, however, a briefing schedule might appear sometime in late summer or early fall, and oral arguments could begin before the end of the year.

Now that the FCC has approved a version of must-carry, having dragged its feet as long as Congress would tolerate, it's up to the broadcast industry and its constituents to persuade Congress or the FCC to eliminate the sunset provision. They have five years to do so, or must prevail in an intervening court battle to win the cable/broadcast war.

PATRICIA THOMSON

REFUGEE REFUSE

Canadian independents and civil libertarians have allied to fight the deportation order against Salvadoran refugee Victor Manuel Regalado Brito. The 38 year-old journalist and filmmaker was first exiled from his country in 1980 by a Salvadoran junta. Two years later he sought political refugee status in Canada but discovered that he had already been identified as a subversive and "threat to the national interest or security" by government officials because of a previous speaking tour of the country on behalf of the solidarity movement with El Salvador. Canadian immigration returned Regalado to his originating point in the United States, where he was incarcerated in the Plattsburg, New York, jail before being transferred back to Canada for another two months in prison. After intense public pressure, Regalado was granted "conditional freedom," and embarked on a five-

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For Salvadoran filmmaker-journalist Victor Manuel Regalado Brito, the war at home is still being fought in Canada, where he is seeking political refuge in face of a Supreme Court deportation order.

Courtesy MainFilm

year battle to regain his refugee status in Canada. Meanwhile, he studied communications in Montréal and joined the independent film cooperative Mainfilm. Last year he began his first feature project, *Washington, D.C.*, the story of a young Latin American exile's confrontation with U.S. immigration officials. But this February, the Supreme Court of Canada rejected Regalado's appeal for a change in status, and a deportation order was issued. As a result, Mainfilm and other supporters have organized a defense campaign to urge the Canadian government to stop the deportation proceedings. Information can be obtained from: Victor Regalado Support Committee, Civil Liberties Union, 1825 Champlain, Montréal, Québec, Canada H2L 2S9.

RENEE TAJIMA

PBS POLICY REVIEW

The report of the committee convened by the Public Broadcasting Service to examine its policies and procedures concerning programming [see "Board in Flames: Conservatives Take Control at CPB," January/February 1987 and "Sequels," May 1987] was released in April. The committee, chaired by PBS board member and former FCC chair E. William Henry, affirmed the position that PBS program policies "should make it clear that PBS will not allow any improper efforts to influence its programming process or program content." The recently abandoned proposal for a study of the content of public affairs programs aired by PBS to be initiated by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, advocated by former board member Richard Brookhiser, and the controversy surrounding National Endowment for the Humanities funding of *The Africans* series could be considered efforts addressed by this caveat. A PBS press release quoted Henry on this point: "We believe it is essential that PBS programs be free of any editorial interference on the part of funders or others who seek improperly to influence program content, whether governmental or private."

The committee also recommended that PBS adopt a "courage and controversy" standard, strengthening a "commitment to include programs in its schedule that present viewpoints from outside society's existing consensus or that challenge conventional ideas" and devise specific methods for presenting point-of-view programs in response to PBS fare. PBS president Bruce Christensen subsequently announced plans for 60-second spots allowing viewers' opinions to be aired.

Concerning standards of "objectivity and balance," the report confirmed that this provision applies to PBS's overall schedule, not individual programs. At the same time, the committee underscored "PBS's authority to seek independent verification of a program's accuracy, and to reject a program if a producer cannot verify material factual assertions or fails to correct material errors."

In 1971 PBS issued a "Statement of Policy on Program Standards and Practices," and, in 1972, a "Document on Journalism Standards and Guidelines." Without disowning these directives, the committee suggested revisions, based on the identified need for clarification "to keep pace with changes in PBS's programming role and procedures." The report has been forwarded to the PBS board of directors for approval and will be voted upon at its April 29 meeting.

MARTHA GEVER

COKE IS IT

Coca-Cola, the parent organization of Columbia Pictures, has agreed to finance an initiative to bring new talent into studio film production. The Discovery Program will provide up to $30,000 in production money to each of six live-action short films, to enable professionals in various motion picture crafts to get a chance to direct. The project is run by Chanticleer Films, a new venture of Jonathan Sanger *(Elephant Man)* and attorney-agent Jana Sue Memel, the originators of the Discovery idea. Sanger calls Discovery a nonprofit undertaking, although its focus is on projects with commercial appeal. According to administrator Hilary Anne Ripps, the selected film projects are intended as resumé reels for presentation to studios. The six finalists will receive production cash and in-kind assistance, and each film will be produced by Sanger and/or Memel. In return, each of the first-time directors will guarantee Chanticleer first look at any projects in development, with the stipulation that a minimum of one of their first three feature films will be produced by the company and distributed by Columbia. The application deadline for the first year of the Discovery Program was May 1, but plans for the second year include expansion to 10 projects.

RT

EMPIRE BUILDERS

With a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts, the Foundation for Independent Video and Film has undertaken a study of the feasibility of a New York State Independent Production Fund that would commission and distribute works by New York State video and film artists for and in conjunction with the New York State public television system.

The study will survey current sources of production funding available to New York State film- and videomakers and explore precedents for independent/public television collaborations, such as WNET's TV Lab and Independent Documentary Fund, *American Playhouse*, and the Learning Channel, as well as foreign models of government financing of independent work, such as the Australia and Ontario Film Commissions, and television systems' sponsorship of independent production, such as that of Britain's Channel Four and ZDF in West Germany.

The new fund, if ultimately established, would supplement the traditional funding avenues open to New York State mediamakers: the NYSCA Film and Media Programs, the New York Council on the Humanities media grants, and New York Foundation for the Arts fellowships. Unlike existing grantmaking entities, the fund would have a mandate to develop innovative packaging and distribution strategies, and to work closely with the state public television system, to provide high quality independent programming for New York State.

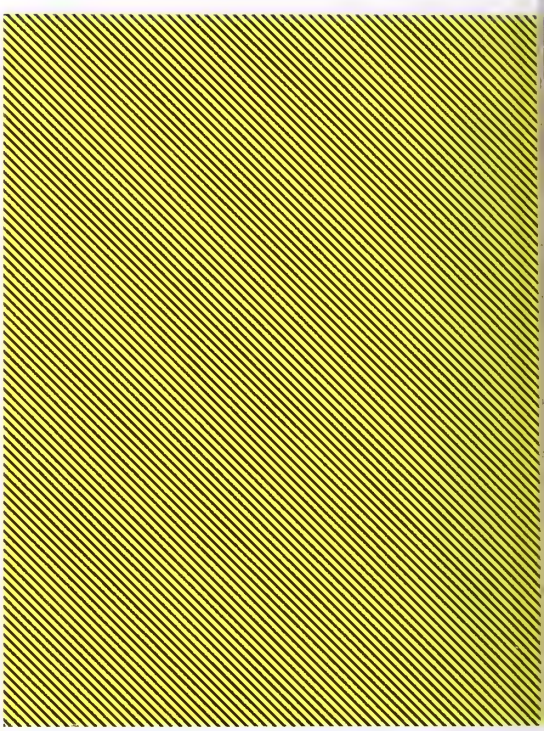
The study is being researched and written by Debra Goldman, a freelance journalist and former associate editor of *The Independent*, and is expected to be completed by Summer 1987.

TWO FUNDS ANNOUNCED

When the Film Fund, one of the few sources of support earmarked for social issue-oriented media, closed shop a year ago, the fate of

FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

THE INDEPENDENT



several specialized "donor advised" accounts was left up in the air. During the intervening months, ex-Film Fund program officer Lillian Jimenez administered dispursal of grants from the Beldon Fund, the Benton Foundation, the Boehm Foundation, the CarEth Foundation, and the Women's Project to film- and videomakers who had applied to the now-defunct Film Fund. In 1987 these accounts found two new homes—with the Beldon and Benton grants forming the core of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film's new Donor-Advised Film and Video Fund [see information on page 36 in this issue] and at the Funding Exchange's recently established Paul Robeson Fund for Film and Video. For the current round of grantmaking, Jimenez is acting as consultant for both projects.

Incorporating the mechanisms developed for donor advised accounts at the Film Fund, both funds will convene peer panels to screen applicants' work and recommend grant recipients. The Benton Foundation and the Beldon Fund, through the FIVF fund, will concentrate on media projects dealing with peace and environmental issues. Together, the two foundations will distribute about $35,000 in September 1987. However, with an eye toward the future, the Benton Foundation has also provided FIVF with a grant to do outreach to the foundation community in an effort to expand the fund. Guidelines and applications are available from FIVF. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

The Paul Robeson Fund's guidelines will solicit work within the more general category of social issue media. Jimenez reports that during its first year, only single film and video production and distribution efforts will be considered for support through the Robeson Fund, but the Funding Exchange foresees expanding eligibility to include special projects that promote social issue media, such as exhibitions and publications. And the Funding Exchange hopes to add $75,000 in discretionary money to the donations of the private foundations now participating, raising the sum available well above its present level of $225,000. The deadline for 1987 Paul Robeson Fund grants was May 1, but information about 1988 grants application procedures can be obtained from the Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

SEQUELS

Four nominations for the **CPB board of directors** now await Senate confirmation ["Sequels," April 1987]. The most recent nominee whose name was sent to Congress by the White House is Archie Purvis, senior vice president of ABC Distribution, a Democrat. The board, which should consist of 10 members, now counts only four.

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EYES ON THE PRIZE: AFI SEMINAR EXAMINES BLACK PARTICIPATION IN AMERICAN MEDIA

Monona Wali

Contemporary Black Perspectives in American Media, a seminar held February 21 at the American Film Institute campus in Los Angeles, was not just another how-to-get-a-break-in-the-business event preaching the old truisms of persistence and perserverance to naïve industry hopefuls. It proved to be an extraordinary gathering that gave not only a practical outlook on the film and television industry but also a historical and emotional overview seen through the eyes of 26 panelists and invited speakers, whose depth and breadth of experience would have qualified any one of them to conduct a day-long seminar alone.

The event was organized by Carroll Parrott Blue, an independent documentary filmmaker and assistant professor of telecommunications at San Diego State University. She developed the seminar over a period of three months while an instructor-in-residence at AFI, and judging by the packed house (participants paid $90 to attend), the first-time event proved a success. The high quality of professionalism in the panels was matched only by the high quality of the audience. In the question and answer sessions, it became clear that there were many film and television producers, writers, directors, actors, and actresses in attendance. And they did not hesitate to make the panelists accountable for their actions and opinions, providing for several lively encounters over the course of the day. Blue warned the audience that they would be assaulted with information because she wanted to cover no less that 27 perspectives on the entertainment media, including the academic, creative, corporate, legislative, and alternative aspects. With such a broad range, the seminar ran the danger of being spread too thin, but the high level of enthusiasm and generosity of the panelists kept the pace enjoyable, while breathless.

James Snead, associate professor of English and Comparative Literature at Yale and a scholar of Joyce and Faulkner, set the tone for the day with a 20-minute presentation on the treatment of blacks in moving-image media. Going beyond the general bemoaning of stereotypical images of blacks, Snead presented a scholarly breakdown of the processes of racism on the basis of three basic principles: 1. mythification: covering history with fantasy and myth, 2. marking: where the visual and aural contrast between blacks and whites are exaggerated for cinematic and political reasons, marking the blacks as black and different as possible, and 3. omission: the exclusion of positive images of blacks. "We tend to believe what we see, but also see what we want to believe," Snead said, citing the example of the theme of the white woman threatened by the black savage as a popular Hollywood device. He illustrated his point with three film clips that demonstrated that very little had changed in Hollywood's depiction of blacks, beginning with a clip from Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*, followed by one from the recent remake of *King Kong* and another from a James Bond film, featuring wild, black natives dancing savagely in front of their white female prey. Snead left the most important question of the day on the table: Would the increased presence of blacks on and off the screen make an impact on the future of black and minority images in films and television?

The subsequent panels were organized into four subject areas. In the first, "The Creative Community of Film and Television," both positive and negative experiences of being black and working in the industry were examined. Pamela Douglas, a past member of the board of directors of the Writers Guild of America and a screen writing instructor at the University of Southern California, introduced the first bone of contention when she pronounced that "solutions reside not in retracing the crimes and mysteries of the past, but in charting a fresh course." Members of the audience tackled her on the wisdom of this philosophy, arguing that too much history has been denied to ignore it. Douglas then defended her position that the constant re-examining of black history "roots us in a place that's like molasses." Having said that, she admitted that her last project was a two-hour movie biography of the life of the nineteenth-century black feminist abolitionist Sojourner Truth. She explained the difficulty of getting project assignments that did not dwell on the past and that she was struggling to get her pet project—a movie of life on the first space station—off the ground.

Throughout the seminar it became clear that a lot of research had been done examining not only on-screen racism but also the off-screen hiring practices in the industry. One of the ironies of the day, however, was receiving facts and figures that confirmed the minority status of blacks in the industry from such an impressive array of black professionals who had obviously overcome the odds in the last 20 years—not only as members of the entertainment business but as influential and powerful members. Some of the more depressing statistics came from Toey Caldwell, a national board member of the Screen Actors Guild and a national and local member of Association of Film, Television, and Radio Actors. He presented an overview of what it meant to be a black actor or actress in 1985 (the year for which the most current statistics have been compiled), adding that 1986 showed no signs of improvement. In the film world, the major studios employed 2,122 performers in featured roles, of which only 246 were black: 174 black actors and 18 black actresses. Episodic TV hired 20,838 performers, of which 1,712 were black (eight percent): 1,230 black males and 482 females. The statistics got worse, Caldwell said, when independent film and television producers were added to the list, and even more bleak when commercials were taken into account. "Life for a black actor is no life at all, and if you're a black actress you're very near extinction." Caldwell admitted that there was little to be done to change the film industry, but lobbying Congress could produce results in television since television stations and broadcasters are subject to regulation by the Federal Communication Commission. Caldwell concluded, "It's very clear to me if we are going to stop this injustice, we as members of the black creative community must come together and challenge the status quo by creating an alternative industry of, by, and for black Americans. It is time black people take control of our lives."

If any area seems to offer promising inroads for blacks and other minorities, cable and home video—the relatively new frontiers of the industry—would be the place. The second panel addressed this, but the prognosis was hardly optimistic. It was quickly pointed out that the inner cities have yet to be wired for cable, making it difficult for black programmers to target their logical audiences. Robert Johnson, president of Black Entertainment Television, the only cable service dedicated exclusively to black programming, argued that the same power bases that control television and film controlled cable and home video, for example, Time, Inc., Viacom, ABC, CBS, etc. Even his own BET is partly owned by Taft Entertainment. "The industry is very consolidated in its ownership structure, and as a result of that the opportunities to penetrate that from a business and creative point are very difficult. Hollywood and cable TV, being a part of it, tend to turn to the same group for programming. I think if there's going to be a significant opportunity for a minority voice to be heard in the entertainment business we're going to have to control the distribution."

Johnson was promptly confronted by a member of the audience who had produced a TV series that Johnson had turned down. The producer wanted to know why BET programmed mainly music videos (of black entertainers) and not more dramatic and documentary material produced by black independents. Put on the defensive, Johnson cited the same problems that all programmers face—ratings and advertising dollars. Apparently, even with blacks at the helm, financial problems were determining programming choices.

In keeping with the theme of business practices, Marvina Hunter of ABC Video Enterprises advised the seminar audience to clarify their target audiences and analyze which markets offered the greatest potential for blacks, which products were best-suited, and how to maximize revenue. She cited the monopolistic control of the home video distribution industry with 35 distributors doing 90 percent of the business. Charles Hobson, senior programming executive at WETA-Washington, who was executive producer of the controversial *The Africans* series, stressed that the audience should look for new methods of financing, and mentioned his own efforts at producing a soundtrack album, trade books, and a college curriculum to accompany his programs.

The third panel of the day, "Network Television and Its Suppliers," featured heavyweights like Phyllis Tucker Vinson, vice president of Children's and Family Programming at NBC, Frank Dawson, an independent producer working at Universal Studios, Ronald Taylor, vice president of Drama Development at Warner Brothers, and Julian Fowles, executive producer at public television station KCET in Los Angeles. Of all the panels, this one reflected most clearly what it's like to work within a staid and entrenched system. All the panelists had worked their way up through the ranks of either the networks or the network suppliers, and their collective experience indicated that it was a rough road both in and out of the mainstream. Phyllis Tucker Vinson was applauded for her insistence on programming that reflected the racial diversity of America. Ronald Taylor addressed the theme of anger and bitterness that surfaced more than once during the day. "Leave it behind," he said. Taylor went so far as to suggest that black writers develop comic material because making people laugh was the best way to get through the door.

Members of this panel also expressed hope for the future because of the changing demographics of the country. At the moment blacks make up nine percent of network viewers, but in the not-so-distant future they will account for 20 percent. Given these numbers, as well as the fact that by the year 2080, Hispanics, blacks, and Asians will constitute more than half of the population of the United States, network television will have to conform to new demographic realities.

Marketing, distribution, and exhibition were tackled as the final subject. And again, it was impressive to see the kinds of progress that had been made by black professionals. Nelson Bennett, president of the Baldwin Entertainment Complex, told one of the most interesting stories of the day—his three-theater complex in the Baldwin Hills area of Los Angeles (once considered the Beverly Hills of the black community) is the *only* first-run black-owned theater in a black community in the U.S. At one point, he was forced to sue the major studios to get first-run movies in his theater. A veteran of 12 years in the United Artists chain of theaters—working his way up from popcorn salesman to manager—and Twentieth Century Fox distribution, Bennett was able to beat the system because of his insider knowledge of the workings of the distribution business.

The day's highlight occured in the closing remarks made by Frances Williams, an actress and activist who has worked in the entertainment business for over 60 years. She starred in two Oscar Micheaux films and appeared in *Showboat* and *The River Niger*. She attended the seminar on a day off from shooting *Rented Lips*, a new film by Robert Downey. Williams spoke to the audience as if she were coaching a sports team, rallying and cajoling them to keep fighting, based on years of her own experience. She reminisced that when Ronald Reagan was president of the Screen Actors Guild she headed a minority committee to encourage the hiring of black performers: "Reagan disbanded the committee even then." Williams told the audience, "Remember to be alert. See the whole [chess] board. Everytime you leave a situation you have to make it better for the next person—that's your job." And finally, to great applause, she advised: "*Meet it. Greet it. And defeat it.*"

Monona Wali is an writer and an independent filmmaker in Los Angeles.

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BLOW UP: BUDGET-CUTTING VIDEO-TO-35MM PRODUCTION



Filmmaker-actor Rob Nilsson and Consuelo Faust in a scene from the experimental tape-to-film feature *Heat and Sunlight.*

Courtesy filmmaker

Mia Amato

A few years ago West Coast independent Rob Nilsson released a groundbreaking film, *Signal 7*, an improvisational drama with a miniscule budget, shot on 3/4-inch videotape transferred to 35mm. Nilsson's latest film, *Heat And Sunlight,* demonstrates how he has honed both his improvisational style and his video technique—in this case shooting in the 1/2-inch Betacam format, using only the green tube of a three-tube video camera, and transferring the footage to 35mm black and white film.

Besides directing, Nilsson also wrote and stars in *Heat And Sunlight,* a coproduction of his Berkeley-based New Front Alliance and Steve and Hildy Burns' Snowball Productions Ltd. The Burnses are still photographers and have a corporate communications company in San Francisco. They share producers' credits and created all the black and white still photographs for Nilsson's protagonist—a photojournalist tormented by jealous love. The stills also set the style for the film and its high-contrast images created by the use of video-to-black-and-white. "We shot in tape primarily for style, but a style dictated by economics," says Nilsson. "One of the things we tried to do with *Signal 7* and have tried to do on this film is open up a new way to work, without compromising to the economic demands of the system."

Steve Burns points out that shooting on Betacam was particularly suitable for Nilsson's improvisional direction. "One of the things tape allows you to do is shoot for 20 minutes without stopping," he says. Such creative freedom also comes cheap, at least in terms of tape stock. Speaking at a film seminar in Minneapolis a few months ago, Nilsson compared figures for the first few days of shooting, black and white 35mm versus Beta videocassettes: a probable cost of $29,000 versus his actual expense of just $270 for the cassettes.

The film was a challenge on many levels. With the dialogue improvised and the action largely unscripted, sets were lit 360° and scenes shot with two cameras rolling at the same time. One scene shot in a moving car used two cameras in the back seat to cover two actors conversing in the front, with a sound man and the technical director crouched below the auto's seats. The production also stretched over many months. "Because we couldn't afford to hire everybody for two weeks, we had to wait until people were available," explains Burns. A love scene between Nilsson and dancer Consuelo Faust that occurs near the end of the film, for example, was shot first to accomodate her schedule; over the course of shooting, nine different camera operators were taught Nilsson's improv technique. "It's quite demanding," says director of photography Tomas Tucker, "and all handheld."

To shoot black and white video with a color recording system, no technical modifications of the cameras, Ikegami HL-79EALs, were required. A test circuit panel allows the camera operator to view output from each of the color tubes separately, Tucker explains, and it was this test output, normally fed into the viewfinder or test monitor, that was recorded on videotape.

"All you do is turn one switch on to monitor, and one switch to G [for green]," Tucker says. Why the green tube? "We found green gave us the best flesh tones and the best grey scale." But it remained for technical director Milt Wallace and Bay Area "video expert" Jim Rollins to find

a way to record a single-tube signal on component videotape. Their solution, after much testing, was to record a *composite* video signal using component video field recorders. "Both the Sony BVU-1A and BVW-25 will take a composite video input," says Wallace. "But the recorder decodes the signal and lays it down on tape in component form. It is played back as composite through the composite output." Ordinary 50 and 60 foot cables were used to connect the cameras to recorders at a monitoring station set up at each location by Wallace with teams of cable pullers keeping the wires free as cast and camera operators moved constantly to shoot each scene.

The resulting 60 hours of videocassette footage was edited by Henk Van Eeghen into a film slightly under two hours in length. Varitel Video in San Francisco provided off-line and online equipment in exchange for an equity position in the project. According to Burns, all that is left is the final audio mix and the transfer to 35mm black and white film, which will be done by Image Transform at an estimated cost of $25,000-30,000.

"Our total budget—with lawyers and everything—is about $485,000," says Burns. The cost of shooting the film was only $68,000. "Everyone deferred their salaries. For every dollar deferred, they have some equity in the film. If, for example, someone had deferred $1,000 and the film makes money, they will receive that back plus the equity." According to Burns, "somewhere between 80 and 100 people" participated, and many contributed equipment or cash as well. Larger sums have come from investors who are limited partners.

Test footage from Image Transform (which handled the tape-to-color film conversion of *Signal 7*) shows a rich, dramatic chiaroscuro. While *Signal 7* was often murky, the tests for *Heat and Sunlight* illustrate that use of a higher-quality camera and tape recording format is successful in decreasing light "smearing" and increasing picture detail. "Using the single tube should give us a sharper picture because registration between the tubes is no longer necessary," Nilsson observes. "The tests have indicated you need to work with gamma control [during the transfer], because otherwise you can't get the right contrast."

Other Bay Area independents have also begun to use this new technique. Director Peter Adair (*Word Is Out, The AIDS Show*) recently used green-tube-only for an industrial film that intercut tape-to-film footage with archival black and white film for a *Zelig* effect. A shorter industrial, mastered on video, was also produced locally with green-tube mono. "I don't know why more people don't use it," says Nilsson. "My purpose is to continue to do work, not to cut corners, but to devise new ways to work in film."

Mia Amato covers film and tape on both coasts for a variety of publications.

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KEEPING THE BEAT: SYNC ON THE SET

Alan Zdinak

On a balmy autumn evening in lower Manhattan a film crew gets poised for "action" as music video director Zbigniew Rybczynski bellows, "Everybody ready? Paul, playback please!" "Paul" is sound engineer Paul Bachmann. And playback is—well, it ought to be Lou Reed's "The Original Wrapper." But the plodding industrial clamor that clanks out of Bachmann's speakers is a far cry from the funk and scratch attack of Reed's paean to healthy skepticism. Still, the action staggers along to the drowsy rhythm like some neo-expressionist ballet. The lethargic soundtrack *is* "The Original Wrapper"—played back at one-third speed. For Bachmann, as resident sound man at RybczynskiVision, such sonic shenanigans are par for the course.

In the completed video, the rappers will bounce along in perfect sync to the synthesizer riffs. They'll slap the lids down on their human parcels to the snap of a snare drum. It's the sort of manic visualization of a song for which director/cameraman/editor Rybczynski is notorious. In his painstaking efforts to accurately illustrate the music, the man never misses a beat. And in precisionist work like Rybczynski's, where action and edits take specific musical cues, sync on the set is a critical concern.

As in *The Original Wrapper* video, Rybczynski often complicates things further by directing talent to perform to music played back at unnatural speeds. How does Bachmann cope? "Swiss accuracy," he'll retort. And he's not simply flexing his national pride. For music playback, Bachmann employs a Swiss-made Nagra reel-to-reel tape recorder. With its quartz crystal sync generator, the Nagra is something of a film industry standard, although it is not uncommon to see less sync-finicky music video productions do without. Rybczynski also has a crystal sync motor on his Arriflex BL3 camera. This does not add up to technical sync, Bachmann demures. That would require the camera to be "slaved"—plugged into—the Nagra, or vice versa, so that the sync of one motor could be regulated by the other. What is achieved, though, is a self-resolving system. Since camera and playback have internal sync regulation, while operating independently each is constant. As long as the action, cued by the playback, is on the beat, sync on the editing table is ensured.

In videos for the Art of Noise and Yoko Ono, Rybczynski used playback at half-speed but filmed at the standard 24 frames-per-second. He edited the resulting double-time footage by deleting frames to put the action back in sync with the now normal-speed soundtrack. On *The Original Wrapper*, Rybczynski wanted to shoot at eight fps and have the playback at an equivalent one-third of the standard speed. Beyond half-speed, however, the reducible operating speed ratios of the Arri and the Nagra are not the same. Bachmann had to take the one-inch master of the song to a transfer studio and, working with the frame counter, dub the song to 1/4-inch tape at a resolution approximating eight fps—a decidedly nonstandard speed. Then, playing back the tape on the Nagra at 7 1/2 ips, he matched the operating speed of Rybczynski's camera, resulting in a cartoon effect on screen.

This symbiotic relationship between playback, the performers, and the camera becomes even more involved in a system Bachmann and Rybczynski developed and used effectively on clips for Yoko Ono, Blancmange, and the Fat Boys. The process begins with an analysis of the song. Rybczynski and Bachmann break it down, to the last beat, and translate it onto paper in Rybczynski's own system of notation. Bachmann dubs the one-inch master of the song provided by the record label to 1/4-inch tape with 60 hz pilot tone for Nagra sync. Using their schematic analysis as a guide, he edits the dub on a mobile 1/4-inch deck. There might be as many as 40 or 50 edits for a three-minute song. Bachmann splices one end of an edit to another to create a closed loop which will play a bar or two of the song over and over again, *ad infinitum*, in a seamless rhythm.

To play back his closed loops on the set Bachmann had to jerry-rig his Nagra. He runs the tape through the Nagra's open transport system as usual, but dispenses with the feed and take-up reels. Instead, he stretches the tape straight out the back and loops it around a single reel spindled on a ball-point pen gaffer-taped to a grip stand (a tripedal stand indigenous to film sets). "It does look a little stone age, but we like the idea of using ordinary items in a high-tech environment. It's amusing, and most importantly, it works." Still, he admits, it took some practice. But by moving the stand in or out and using a playback speed of 7 1/2 ips to keep the loops at a manageable length, Bachmann is able to finesse tape tension and regulate sync.

The obvious production advantage of Bachmann's closed loop system is to silence once and for all the oft heard AD's lament, "Waiting on sound recue." For a given take, playback can be continuous. Between shots the volume can be reduced to a subliminal level, helping keep the talent in the groove and a weary crew on its toes. When the director is ready to shoot, just hike the decibels and you're ready for rapid retakes.

Back on West Broadway, even with the near-perpetual playback, Bachmann can't seem to relax on the Lou Reed set. He must be forever vigilant lest some unwary crew person should strut through his strung out loop like a marathon winner. Talk about the Swiss Guard.

Alan Zdinak is a freelance writer and storyboard artist.

An Outsider's Aesthetic

CONTEMPORARY INDEPENDENT FILM IN CANADA



In *Next of Kin*, one of director Atom Egoyan's postmodern made-in-Toronto features, a young WASP-Canadian man tries to adopt an Armenian family.

All photos courtesy Canadian Film-Video Export

Geoff Pevere

Everything I do I could be doing it or not, and it wouldn't matter either way.

— Van, in Atom Egoyan's *Family Viewing*

Generally speaking, the stories told by the Canadian cinema for the past quarter century have been the stories of losers: accounts of people who are defined not by what they are able to achieve and do, but by what they wish to do and cannot. People, that is, who don't matter.* The persistence with which Canadians make films (and write books and poems and plays) about nonachievers can only be understood as a bona-fide cultural phenomenon, the distinctive expression of a cultural voice that—significantly—is convinced it has no cultural voice. For Canadians, the conviction that we have no culturally distinguishing marks, and the subsequent sense of collective alienation from self and homeland this conviction instills, is itself the defining characteristic of a national culture.

It should not be surprising that, in this context, much time is spent in an effort to identify and claim cultural things which are unquestionably ours. For Canadians, the process of identifying culturally distinct forms of expression is not just an academic conceit; it is a necessary form of resistance. In fact, this impulse to divide-and-distinguish has been sufficiently prevalent in Canadian cultural discussion to ensure that the predominant project of criticism in Canada has been the cleaving of identifiably "Canadian" cultural forms from any other. It is not easy or easily finished work. Since most of it unavoidably occurs in the Goliath-like shadow of U.S. cultural dominance, cultural criticism in this country generally tends not to be descriptive and positive, but prescriptive and negative. We look not at our cultural products individually to determine what they are, but in groups to determine what they are not. Or to prescribe what they *should* be.

(It's been impossible for such rigorously objective and asocial theoretical practices as structuralism and semiotics to take hold in a cultural context as feverishly subjective and uncertain as this one. For such radical objectivism to stick, it requires the kind of complete and unassailable cultural assurance found in places such as France, Great Britain, and the United States—places where cultural identity is no longer an issue of either concern or consciousness.)

I raise these points about alienation and the predominantly prescriptive nature of cultural criticism in Canada in order to introduce—in concentrated and miniature form—a mindset that prevails in virtually all corners of serious cultural activity across this vast and windy country. (By "serious" I don't mean grim or incomprehensible to all but postgrads, merely untainted by The Bottom Line.) It's a mindset that has determined not only the motivation and the methodology behind this article, but, with striking consistency, the form of the cultural products it examines. While I indulge the proud Canadian critical tradition of sniffing out what's certifiably Canadian about our contemporary independent filmmaking scene, many of Canada's independent filmmakers are themselves working through this same issue of cultural self-distinction. If there's any apparent and reasonable shared characteristic binding the otherwise diverse activities of

* For the most part, this article refers to films made by English Canadians. Independent French-language feature production in Québec is sufficiently distinct, historically, politically, and aesthetically, to comprise a national cinema. Fortified culturally by an indigenous language and history of resistance, Québec spends considerably less time than English Canada wondering what it is or arguing about what it isn't.

Canada's independent filmmakers—and one that doesn't sacrifice aesthetic diversity in the name of critical convenience—it's the determination to isolate and identify cultural subjectivity. Moreover, like the great Canadian critical project, it's an exercise that's usually conducted in negative, what-we-are-not terms, although occasionally, though far less frequently, in prescriptive, what-we-ought-to-be terms.

But, before I proceed with a discussion of the distinguishing formal and cultural properties of some recent independent Canadian features, perhaps a note of political clarification is necessary at this point. Lest this Canadian drive to determine cultural specificity smack of some kind of reductionist and reactionary cultural nationalism, I should point out that it's a necessary fact of cultural existence in a context as culturally-imperialized as English Canada. In Canada's case, it's not a matter of marking off one's own forms of cultural expression in order to rank them against others or to use culture as a vehicle for jingoistic isolationism, but a matter of protecting indigenous culture itself. Given both the pervasiveness and popularity of U.S. culture in Canada, to *not* deal in questions of self-identity and independence is to condone and surrender to a particularly effective form of alien occupation. (As a character laments in Wim Wenders' *Kings of the Road*, "The Yanks have even colonized our subconscious.") Insisting upon your own identity and expression, in this context, is more than just a necessary condition of cultural independence; it's a downright healthy sign of subversive life. And a way to fight the alienation.

Historically, it must be noted, this drive to self-distinction in Canadian culture has not been rendered in the familiar mythical, go-for-it terms of puny weaklings kicking the sands of self-assertion into the mug of the mighty oppressor. For the most part, the Canadian state of smothered self-identity has been negatively expressed—more as a debilitating lack, that is, than a unifying condition. The single most distinctive element of most forms of Canadian culture, particularly fiction and film, grows out of this absence of identity in an abstract but concretely negative way: a sense of alienation.

Throughout Canada's otherwise checkered and distinctly noncontinuous film history (which is another epic account of cultural alienation in itself), Canadian filmmakers, in both independent and commercial sectors, have hurled themselves headlong into the chilly murk of psycho-social alienation. Notably, most of the films considered seminal in English Canadian film history have been studies of people unable to connect and incapable of control. Don Owen's *Nobody Waved Goodbye*, made in 1964 at the National Film Board, tells the story of a selfish and idealistic teenager whose flight from home, school, and responsibility leads to eventual rejection by just about everyone, including the superhumanly patient and understanding girlfriend he's made pregnant. *Goin' Down the Road*, made in 1970 by Don Shebib, and considered the *echt*-English Canadian movie of the period, is basically an account of insurmountable circumstances crushing the misbegotten ideals of two itinerant Maritimers seeking the good life in the Emerald City of Toronto. Since these rubes can't read the writing on the Great Wall of Canadian social inequity (could be they can't read at all), they too are banished to the Phantom Zone of Canadian Alienation, with nothing but each other and warm Molson Export to relieve the boredom. Even David Cronenberg, undoubtedly English Canada's most preeminently exportable auteur, is essentially a chronicler of chronic cerebral detachment, usually of the most literal sort imaginable. In the ickily graphic, sci-fi horror realm of Cronenberg (*Scanners*, *Videodrome*, *The Fly*, etc.), the condition of Canadian alienation reaches its most profound and essential expression: mind tends to lose its connection to body, consciousness withdraws from sensory stimulation. Not surprisingly, Cronenberg's films most often deal with forms of mental control—perhaps the ultimate expression of an alienated, as well as colonized, sensibility.

There are few avenues in the ghetto of chronic disaffection that aren't abrupt cul-de-sacs. (Not surprisingly, past cinematic glory days in Canada faded abruptly—a fact which is equally attributable to government indifference and the unremittingly fatalistic nature of the movies themselves—which never spoke to regular, movie-going Canadians nearly as effectively as *American Graffiti* or *Jaws*.) What's most remarkable about much recent contemporary English Canadian independent filmmaking is not merely how consistent it is in its exploration of states of fractured selfhood, but the new life it's discovered in such bleakly familiar landscapes. As a persistent theme in many recent Canadian independent movies, alienation may still be a stifling social, sexual, and psychological condition, but it's become terrific source of creative juice.

In their own way, despite often radically different formal, narrative, and conceptual strategies, films such as Bachar Chbib's *Memoirs* (1984) and *Evixion* (1986), Atom Egoyan's *Next of Kin* (1984) and *Family Viewing* (1987), Dimitrios Estdelacropolis' *Mother's Meat and Freud's Flesh* (1984), Patricia Gruben's *Low Visibility* (1984), Michael



Brenda Roberts and Penelope Stella in *Low Visibility*, Patricia Gruben's story of psychological disorder.



The narcotized view of the world from Peter Mettler's *Scissere*.

Jones' *The Adventure of Faustus Bidgood*, Leon Marr's *Dancing in the Dark* (1986), Peter Mettler's *Scissere* (1982), John Paizs' *Crime Wave* (1985), Patricia Rozema's *I've Heard the Mermaids Singing* (1987),** to mention a significant few, concern themselves not only with the separation of individual from collective consciousness, but with active strategies for replugging the disaffected into some sense of social, political, and sexual purpose. In cases where society itself is held responsible for the alienation of its constituents, as in *Family Viewing, Memoirs,* and *Low Visibility*, the need for alternative social systems is unequivocally stressed—which constitutes a demonstration of progressive social radicalism in feature films that's about as characteristically Canadian as the cactus or the koala bear.

What has facilitated this shift from the debilitating to the progressive (or at least critical) expression of Canadian cultural alienation is probably worth a turgid tome or two, but I'd like to venture a suggestion: television. Television, that is, in concert with contemporary film and media theory. Made by a generation of mostly young, mostly university-educated filmmakers, the list of Canadian independents cited above reflects a body of work produced by and conscious of the culturally homogenizing effects of mass electronic media. But in Canada, it should be noted, it's not merely the death of print culture or a desensitivity to violence that's at the root of TV evil. In Canada the box has proved the most sublimely successful medium for cultural colonization. Television delivers the messages of the United States in the most painless, accessible, and attractive way possible, and for 30 years, Canadian airwaves have been dominated by U.S. programming—both as exported, via cable, over the border and as a significant percentage of programming on Canadian stations.

For many in the contemporary generation of independent Canadian filmmakers discussed here, most of whom are between 25 and 35 years old, this process of living room cultural occupation has been a fact of life. Their films reflect not only this intensive, lifelong exposure to the products of U.S. popular culture, but, perhaps due to the ascendancy of semiotics, psychoanalysis, and feminism in film and media studies over the past decade (when this bunch would've been hitting the books), they demonstrate a critical awareness of how this exposure to the cultural products of alien culture must necessarily lead to the chronic alienation from their own cultural context. In other words, what this generation has achieved, and what simultaneously binds them to, and distinguishes them from, their predecessors, is a level of active autocriticism of their inherited condition of cultural disaffection. Theirs is not a cinema of cloudy resignation, of goin' down roads with nobody waving goodbye. The alienation that is the defining characteristic of the Canadian cultural mindset still prevails in their work, but with a profoundly significant difference: it is now a subject instead of a condition.

Significantly if not surprisingly, a number of recent Canadian independents deal explicitly (as did Cronenberg's *Videodrome*) with the connection between television, imperialism, and cultural schizophrenia. In both Atom Egoyan's made-in-Toronto features, *Next of Kin* and *Family Viewing*, the narrative is kicked into place by the protagonist's exposure to a video image: in the first case, a tape at a family counselling clinic that introduces the disaffected WASP hero to the troubled Armenian family that he will subsequently try to adopt; in the second, half-erased video images of an idyllic and forgotten childhood that the protagonist's father has been covering over with pornographic home movies—images that eventually incite the hero, Van, to embark on a full scale anti-patriarchal domestic insurrection. In each case, narrative development is virtually hinged upon the intervention of television technology—but in an uncommonly anti-alarmist way. In the positive causal link they make between media exposure and social activism (TV prods these people *out* of stupefaction), Egoyan's films couldn't be more out-of-step with prevailing post-McLuhan media doomspeak. Within the deep blue death of the tube, Egoyan's characters find reason to live.

The actions of Steven Penny, the sublimely blitzed-out hero of John Paizs' made-in-Winnipeg *Crime Wave*, may not be the result of TV-induced epiphany, but they are no less the result of idiot box overindulgence. Nor indeed is the film itself: Paizs (who's made several shorts) specializes in the deconstructive collage of elements drawn from the pool of collective pop experience. His first feature, the story of a chronically-blocked writer of "color crime movies" who lives above a suburban garage with his Underwood and his movie-stuffed fantasies, might best be described as sitcom-noir, or maybe Tex Avery splatter. The film is a deliriously deadpan depiction of a world totally infused by the flotsam of electronic-age U.S. culture. But the eerie comic

** This auterial list, incidently, lends the alienation thesis yet another level. As you may have noticed by the decidedly non-WASP monikers, the English Canadian independent feature scene is populated by a significant proportion of first- and second-generation non-Anglo-Saxons. Frequently, and centrally in the films of Atom Egoyan, alienation is defined by a sense of intergenerational pan-cultural limbo. Displaced from both history and geography, this could be Canada's most fruitfully rootless generation of filmmakers yet.



Julia Gilmore and Philip Baylaucq in *Memoirs*, Bachar Chbib's Canadian comedy that turns cultural disaffection into satire.

effect of the film isn't explained by the simple camp appeal of amplified junk-culture conventions; dramatic content is significantly less exaggerated in Paizs' films than their hyperkinetic form. Rather it resides in the juxtaposition of the most outrageously ill-matched archetypes and conventions. In *Crime Wave*'s most sublimely surreal sequence, all Steven's characters, including the insurance-selling newlywed psychos, simultaneously come alive to party and brawl in their helpless creator's low-rent loft.

Unlike *Family Viewing*, which posits the distinction of consciousness from media as a hopeful condition of social activism, *Crime Wave*'s brilliance lies in its suggestion of the complete, sponge-like integration of media *with* consciousness. Just as *Crime Wave*'s characters are comprehensible only as clusters of familiar pop conventions, the film itself is meaningless as anything other than a vehicle for the conventions it plunders, scrambles, and regurgitates. The level of post-electronic age detachment from self and culture it represents becomes total: there's no escaping infiltration by electronic media because it is a process that eventually precludes the possibility of conceiving of alternatives altogether, gradually quelling even the desire for alternatives. Unlike so many other disaffected protagonists of Canadian movies, Steven is comparatively happy. Benumbed perhaps, but quite content, thanks very much.

As played by writer-director-actor Paizs, Steven can be variously interpreted as naïve, stupid, oblivious, shy—even retarded. Whatever you call him, he's archetypically Canadian: on the outside of events, more acted upon than active, stupefied by the paradoxical desire to be something he isn't—a successful writer of Hollywood color crime movies. This image of the protagonist as an embodiment of ineffectuality is a staple element of many Canadian movies, the cinema of losers, and the obvious expression of an alienated cultural condition. But what filmmakers like Paizs—and Montreal's Bachar Chbib, whose *Memoirs* is a similarly wry comic romp through a postmodern wasteland—have done is place this potentially crushing sensibility in a stridently anti-realist and satirical context. Their heroes' ineffectuality is comic and self-critical, rather than tragic and self-pitying.

In many contemporary Canadian independent films, the debilitating detachment suffered by characters is taken a logical step further and treated as a legitimate psychological disorder, subjected to or requiring professional rehabilitative care. Such diverse films such as Patricia Gruben's *Low Visibility*, Leon Marr's *Dancing in the Dark*, and Peter Mettler's *Scissere* deal explicitly with people undergoing treatment for psychological disorders that are manifested by the subjects' feeling of profound disconnectedness. Other films take pains to establish their protagonists' eligibility for professional psychological counselling. The title character of Michael Jones' *The Adventure of Faustus Bidgood*—a wildly absurd, Pythonesque first-person account of the short (and possibly delusional) reign of the first leader of the "Peoples' Republic of Newfoundland"—is a paranoid, sexually-repressed minor bureaucrat prone to slipping in and out of hallucinatory fever dreams. The story of the tragically obedient housewife of *Dancing in the Dark*, who responds to the news of her husband's extra-marital antics by dispassionately puncturing him several times with a butcher knife, is interspersed with several sequences depicting her interrogation by a faceless male psychiatrist. In both the domestic and the hospital sequences, Marr emphasizes, through visual inserts and voiceover narration, the woman's feelings of chronic separation from her surroundings and past actions. Here, in other words, the culturally-determined sense of Canadian detachment has crossed over into an act of cool, psychotic aggression.

Bruno Scissere, whose narcotic-addled senses function as the screen through which the world is experienced in Mettler's *Scissere*, might be the heroine of Leon Marr's film after several years of doctors, drugs, and padded walls. Upon his release from a heroin addiction rehabilitation center, the mentally hollowed Scissere imagines himself "inside" the sensibilities of four random passers-by spotted in a subway station. Essentially a feature-length exercise in the cinematic rendering of fractured self-identity, *Scissere* is not only an exhaustingly inventive formal exercise, but yet another example of the Canadian obsession with terminal alienation finding an altogether new and revitalized form of expression in an independent production.

Low Visibility, made by Vancouver filmmaker Patricia Gruben, is a kind of Canadian *Enigma of Kaspar Hauser*, as well as a fascinating variation on the clinical study offered by *Dancing in the Dark*. After he is found wandering alone on a mountain highway muttering profanities, a man known only as Mr. Bones is taken to a hospital where a team of doctors try to restore him to a state of socially acceptable "normalcy." Unable or unwilling to play along and often diabolically aware of precisely what'll piss the shrinks off, Mr. Bones maneuvers his willful withdrawal from the world of language and social interaction into a profoundly effective, and completely silent, campaign of subversion. His increasingly calculated attempts to thwart the agents of social stability can't be interpreted as anything but a

deliberate effort at undermining the behavioral foundations of "rational" society itself. Like Egoyan, Gruben finds in the conditioned Canadian state of cultural detachment the possibility for new forms of effective social resistance: a quiet revolution.

If there's a single independent Canadian film that synthesizes these positivisitic and critical elements of the contemporary expression of Canadian cultural detachment, it's the first feature by Toronto's Patricia Rozema, *I've Heard the Mermaids Singing*. The first-person experiences of a homely day-dreamy "person Friday" named Polly, Rozema's film sign-posts its contemporary Canadianess at the outset with a video shot of Polly directly addressing the camera. Like the characters in *Memoirs* and *Crime Wave*, Polly is clearly enamored of and intimidated by displays of cool cultural assurance. Taking a secretarial job in a trendy Toronto gallery, Polly quickly falls platonically, or so she claims, for its elegant French curator, a woman who represents everything Polly isn't and isn't likely to become. Like the protagonists of *The Adventure of Faustus Bidgood* and *Scissere*, Polly is prone to narrative-rupturing flights of fantasy. Like Jones' and Mettler's films, *I've Heard the Mermaids Singing*, as the title should imply, is another account of Canadian alienation as a form of madness. As structured by Polly's voiceovers and fantasies, the film slips fluidly and constantly between "objective" narrative events and Polly's subjective interpretation of them, until at the end such distinctions are rendered meaningless. And what's rendered them meaningless is what weds Rozema's Polly with Gruben's Mr. Bones: the assertion of subjective experience as a legitimate, even subversive, form of expression in itself. At film's end Polly hasn't been made to relinquish her fantasy world in the name of enforced collective normality. Rozema's beautiful, brilliant final shot advocates the opposite. Polly draws the "normal" world into her subjective day-dreamy mindscape. Call it the triumph of alienation.

As long as the United States remains where and what it is, Canada's national state of alienation isn't likely to go away. And, while a surprising number of independent feature filmmakers have rendered this inherited state of chronic detachment in critical, comic, and occasionally even radical terms, the instances of autocritical awareness of our state are increasingly obvious in other, more mainstream examples of Canadian pop culture. What do *The Decline of the American Empire* and *The Fly* share if not a common determination to illustrate the ineluctable process of sexual alienation in the aftermath of the so-called sexual revolution? What else but media-determined alienation can be cited to explain the consistent Canadian alacrity in such stridently self-conscious cultural forms as media satire *(SCTV,* prominent contributions to *Saturday Night Live)* and the internationally celebrated experimental films of Bruce Elder, David Rimmer, Michael Snow, and Joyce Wieland? In their chronicling of the Canadian condition, what distinguishes the efforts of the contemporary generation is an apparent desire to work through it: to isolate and name it and hold it up for critical scrutiny.

In this effort, one can't help but see the seeds of a struggle towards a new cultural condition or mindset for Canada. But, with characteristic Canadian defeatism, I wonder what might be missed should this struggle eventually succeed. "Alienation" may be debilitating, restrictive, and negative—but, heck, it's all ours.

Geoff Pevere is a freelance film critic and a programmer for the Toronto Festival of Festivals.

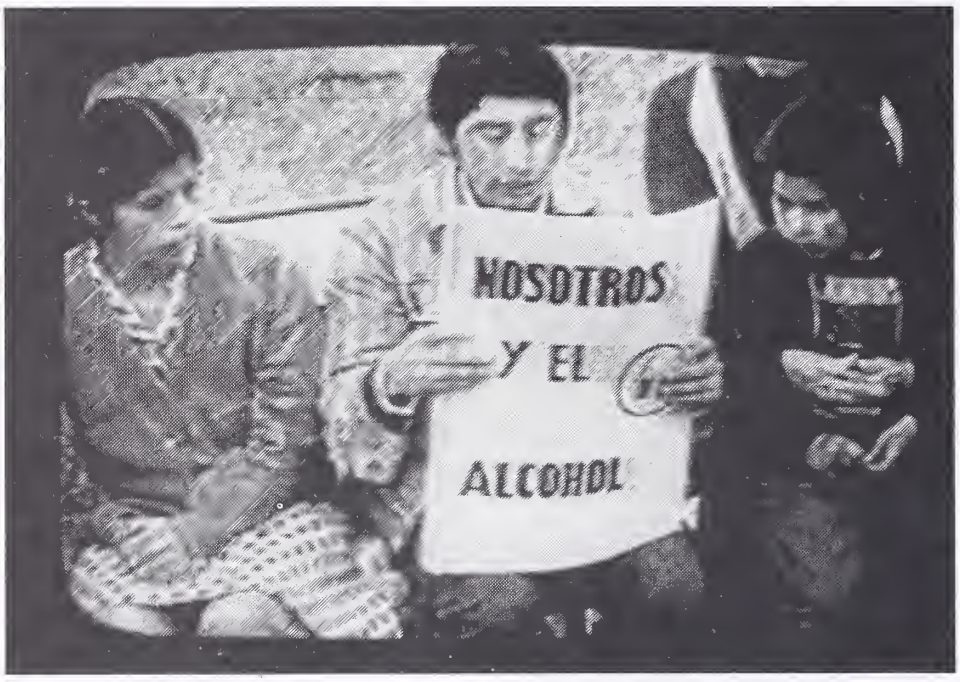
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A scene from Demetrios Estdelacropolis's *Mother's Meat & Freud's Flesh.*

THE OTHER AMERICAS

POPULAR VIDEO AND FILM IN LATIN AMERICA



In *Blanca Azucena (White Lily)*, villagers in southern Chile being trained as popular educators use videotape to evaluate their work.

All photos courtesy Karen Ranucci

Jane Creighton

I caught Oliver Stone's *Salvador* on Cinemax the other night and was reminded, among other things, as to just how often the reading of Latin American experience here has to slog its way through the troubled characterizations of self and other alive in the minds of many North Americans—of whatever political stripe. Stone's leading men traverse a dark night of the soul in El Salvador, using the political circumstances of that country to determine just who they are and who they are not. However favorable or controversial the film's political take on El Salvador might be to the viewer, the film remains in its essence a feverish meditation on the state of mind among some North American white males—presumably a marketable way to introduce the consequences of U.S. interventions in the third world to the public at large. A pragmatic approach to U.S. media politics might suggest that those of us interested in justice in Central and Latin America should be pleased at Hollywoodish renderings of situations south of the Rio Grande that cast any favorable light on combatants swathed in the U.S. government's red paintbrush. The other hand suggests that such renderings are a surreal usage of complex, succinct political realities—like the circumstances of the rape and murder of four U.S. churchwomen in El Salvador or Charles Horman's demise as portrayed in *Missing*—to heighten the horrors experienced by U.S. expatriates. The assumption is that we won't understand it or be interested unless it happens to our anti-heroes.

Various individuals and distribution groups have ignored that assumption in favor of a lively engagement with cross-cultural exchange of film and video productions, among them, El Salvador Media Project, Icarus Films, Cinema Guild, and X-Change TV. The appearance of the eight-hour video program *Democracy in Communication: Popular Video and Film in Latin America* marks a further effort to broaden the representation of Latin America to North American audiences. There is obvious value to us in the fact that this exhibition consists largely of the work of a wide variety of independent Latin American producers representing their own countries to themselves. Videomaker Karen Ranucci compiled over 30 tapes from nine different countries during a year spent working as a freelance videographer-journalist in Latin America. The result is an absorbing mixed bag of fiction, documentary, and music video and film that parlays obvious overall value into diverse detail. There's something here for everybody, whether you are concerned with the state of war in El Salvador or the state of experimental filmmaking in Mexico. Or the state's sense of humor in Nicaragua.

Ranucci unearthed these works in roughly two-week stints spent tracking down any producers she could find in each country. In strictly academic terms, this suggests that a thorough country-by-country representation of popular video and film is not this exhibition's strong point. Since the majority of the tapes have been edited by Ranucci for easier North American distribution (this might account for plot confusion in several), we are not seeing much of this work as it emerged fully conceived from the hands of its producers.

Democracy in Communication is governed instead by a concern for expanding alternative channels of communications distribution in the United States. The exhibit remains flexible to whatever venues might show it, be that full or partial viewings at festivals, universities, galleries, libraries, solidarity groups, public access television, or even, in one instance, such institutions as Bell Laboratories. As such, the

tapes provide a broad exploratory look into the arena of Latin American productions, in the interests of creating avenues and demand for a great deal more.

The project of attaining democracy in communication is not as simple as fighting for equal time in the U.S. for Latin American producers. For the most part, these programs are selected from efforts within each country to create alternative media space. That means one thing in Nicaragua, where no independent video was produced before the overthrow of Somoza in 1979 and where media becomes very much a part of a state in the process of creating itself. It means quite another in El Salvador, where independent production exists entirely within the exigencies of low intensity conflict and guerrilla war. In Brazil and Mexico, both with huge television broadcast corporations heavily engaged in export, independent producers must contend in the margins of markets dominated by forces represented by a sales rep in the international marketing arm of Mexico's TV conglomerate Televisa, quoted in a recent *Variety*: "The public is tired of seeing stories about poor people leading miserable lives."

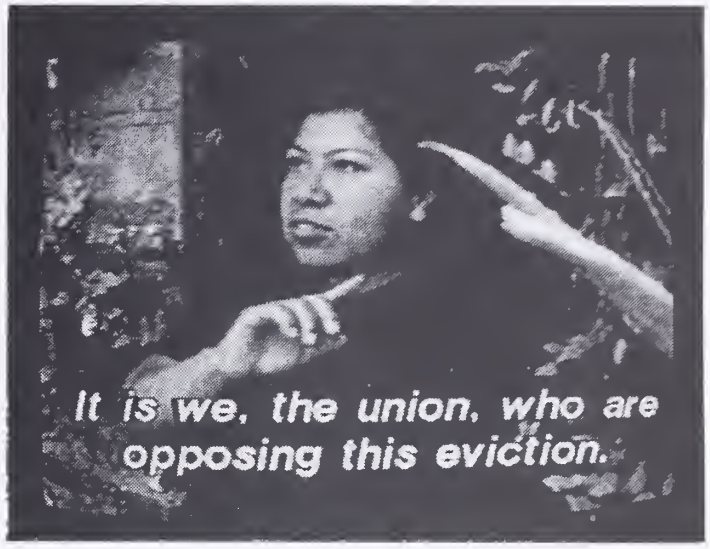
There is not enough information, however, within the scope of the exhibition for the uninitiated viewer to draw a definitive picture of each country's television broadcast situation. The vitality of individual productions and the juxtaposition of those productions country by country instead introduces a range of issues alive in the minds of those Latin Americans not firmly situated inside the marketing profile. What is here? Small-format community video and organizing tapes from Mexico, Brazil, and Chile. Fiction and documentary film from Peru. Music video from Panama and Peru. Satirical newscasts from Brazil, the BBC picturing Chile, a fascinating video standoff between the government and the guerrillas in El Salvador, television game-shows in Nicaragua, and more.*

A five-minute cross section of one afternoon of Mexican TV introduces both that country and the premise that U.S. values and multinational commerce dominate much of Latin TV. From *Magnum PI* to Superlook pantyhose to Mr. Clean to Lionel Richie singing "We made our choice" (of Pepsi) to scenes from ubiquitous Mexican telenovelas exhibiting the vaselined-teeth look of love, we deduce the premise, or the mountain, against which the entire rest of the exhibition makes its assault.

That's a reasonable enough entry and it reasonably disappears into tapes and films that make the world their business according to the interests of the communities and individuals from which they are created. My particular favorites from Mexico are *Amas de Casa (Housewives)* and *Nuestro Tequio (Our Tequio)* which were made, respectively, in an urban barrio and in a Zapotec community in the state of Oaxaca. *Amas* features housewives banding together in a union to fight an eviction notice by literally driving the server out into the street to the accompaniment of fireworks set off from the roofs by young boys. The tape was produced by women filmmakers as part of an organizing effort to help neighborhood women combat real evictions. This staged eviction suggests all the awkwardness and enthusiasm of people making use of video to work out their battle plans.

Nuestro Tequio was made by Zapotecas whose purpose is to document their own culture and institutions. The "tequio" is an all day community event where hundreds of people from all over the region gather to perform some community service, in this case restoring the roof of their city hall building. This plot is simple: the roof needs fixing, the roof gets fixed by hundreds of men marching tins of cement up stairs to the flourishing strains of what I only know how to describe as something like "oompah" music. It's a grand 10-minute representation of how the infrastructures of a community can be cared for by its inhabitants with their own money and their own time. It's of interest to note that the videomakers raise money for their productions by working as migrant farm laborers in the U.S.

* The tapes from Bolivia and Uruguay remain unsubtitled at this date (mid-April) and are not under consideration here.



Women of a Mexican barrio enact an eviction in Cine Mujer's *Amas de Casa (Housewives).*

The explicit use of video for local organizing reappears in two tapes from Chile and Brazil. *Blanca Azucena (White Lily)* takes place in a village in southern Chile. It documents the process by which a group of 10 villagers become popular educators—teaching reading and crafts to local residents. The solid merits of this tape might be encapsulated in the manner in which all 10 educators squeeze onto and around a couch to watch themselves on TV while we watch them move through the various stages of shyness and delight that recognition of a job well done brings. Resistance to self-motivated community education is a matter of fact in Chile. By working out scenarios in video to deal with government and familial resistance, the educators create a model, as do the women in *Amas*, to apply to real life situations. *Blanca Azucena* goes a good bit further in documenting how the protagonists feel about their work. They watch themselves at work and see themselves as others see them. Says one, "We all managed to show something of ourselves. For me it was like seeing a poem."

Beijo Ardente (Overdose) was made by an independent video collective in Brazil in support of a group of artists in the city of Porto Alegre attempting to create a cultural center by reconverting an old gas plant. The script goes for the jugular by representing politicians and industrialists in the body of a sleazy vampire with vague European origins who spends much of his time cowering in the bowels of the gas plant watching television while his skinhead assistant searches the environs for, of course, female food. The vampire's rocky demise has more to do with vampire folklore updated to local humor than it does with the triumph of artists over industrialists, which makes this tape both amusing and somewhat predictable.

Brazil's other offerings include hilarious tapes of caricatured TV correspondent Ernesto Varela who takes his crew to watch the induction of a new director in the Xingu Indian National Park. Says Varela, "The Indians are very happy, dancing and singing. It's amazing the number of journalists here tonight," thus initiating numerous visual and verbal jokes regarding TV journalism's *Cliff Notes* approach to indigenous culture. *Sound On/Vision On*, a collage of predominantly Afro-Brazilian sounds and images, presents exactly that at some length with only slight and unenlightening commentary on the danger economic development projects are posing to indigenous culture. The opposition of the two styles, one cannily dismembering rote journalism and the other giving itself over to the visual and audio richness of its subjects, represents what is both provoking and rewarding about the exhibition in general. The geographical, political, and aesthetic territories covered are vast. Any one of these tapes



The Panamanian music video *Algo de Ti (Something of You)*, by Luis Franco and Sergio Cambefort, combines the lyrics of a love song with scenes of political violence.



***Chile's Forbidden Dream*, a critique of the Pinochet regime, was coproduced by the British Broadcasting Corporation and ICTUS, a Santiago-based theater company.**

suggests many more questions than can or will be answered neatly within the exhibition and its accompanying brochure.

In this light, a program like *Chile's Forbidden Dream*, a coproduction of the BBC and the Chilean theater company ICTUS, satisfies the itch for overview while diminishing the spontaneity apparent in the variegated Brazilian tapes, or even in the above-mentioned Chilean *Blanca Azucena*. A thorough recognition of the ravages wrought by the Pinochet government is laid out by an English narrator. This provides the context for excerpts of the ICTUS group's performances and tapes, many of which echo the theme that years of dictatorship have shrouded the imaginations of Chileans who have lost the ability to dream of, and therefore secure, a just society. That's a conceivable idea, complete unto itself. And particularly so for international audiences who might crave a metaphor they can lay their hands on. But the tape's focus on ICTUS as an artists' group representing the moral and political dilemmas of all of Chile leans to the precious. There are revealing moments toward the end of the tape when ICTUS directors muse over the fact that military censors still allow them to operate. "We are not significant," says one, and though this talented group's efforts to prove that art can conquer fear in Chile are spirited and relentless, the dominant metaphor of the forbidden dream framed in BBC style lends the tape a reductive quality.

By contrast, and in very different political circumstances, the tapes from El Salvador introduce in steely tones the dynamic propaganda war being waged between the military and the guerrillas. *Atlactl* is a short publicity tape made by the military and broadcast over state-controlled television. *Atlacatl* is both a legendary warrior Indian and the name of a special forces battalion trained by the United States as part of an intensified effort to shape up what in the early eighties was a slipshod fighting force. The opening shot backs away from an oversized statue of Atlactl, "the pride of our race that has never been defeated," to reveal the battalion standing in the dark drinking in the words of Colonel Domingo Monterrosa, who delivers his benediction swathed in the imposing shadow of the statue directly behind him. Monterrosa's face is broadly lit against the surrounding darkness in an apparent effort to further the demigod status of this man and his charges. The tape consists mostly of his speech and a pan on the faces of the intent, raring-to-go soldiery.

The reliance on a legendary figure pulled from a long-decimated indigenous population to promote the idea of single-minded, patriotic, deadly force plays off interestingly against the excerpt from *Tiempo de Audacia (Time of Daring)*, a video and film production from the guerrilla communications system. This is something like pitting John Waynese against how people really talk. The clip opens on army soldiers jogging down a city street chanting, "If I catch you/I will kill you/Your blood I will drink/Your flesh I will eat." The excerpt goes on to detail in haunting visuals and edits the extensive domination of military training by the U.S. It opposes that to images of popular support for the FMLN shot in villages where the guerrillas have established themselves. I have discussed this work in some detail elsewhere in these pages ["Freedom of Information Acts: Radio Venceremos Film Collective," April 1985]. Suffice it to say that the clearly partisan approach by both sides allows us to glimpse the war in El Salvador squarely inside the arguments of those fighting it.

The third tape in this section, *Los Refugiados (The Refugees)*, was made by North Americans and is a pragmatic exception to the rule of Latin American producers in this exhibition. It is based on extensive interviews with Salvadoran refugees and North American religious and legal workers in Long Island and works well within the tradition of talking heads-style documentary. In the context of *Atlacatl* and *Tiempo de Audacia*, it provides compelling and politically astute testimony from Salvadorans whose uncertain status as refugees in the U.S. fleshes out the nature of the war in a way that, say, Oliver Stone's there's-bad-guys-on-both-sides thesis in *Salvador* fails to do.

Propaganda is of course one of those dragons whose fire no objective North American observer wants to be caught breathing. But propaganda comes in all styles, from all countries, and it promotes both the best and the worst of causes depending on where the viewer makes a stand. A fundamental premise that should not be missed in this exhibition, and in subsequent efforts to distribute Latin American tapes, is that the nature of particular struggles can be understood and judged through the efforts of interested parties. For instance, we understand something about the nature of U.S. involvement in Central America by hearing Reagan's early characterization of Oliver North as a hero.

We understand something about the differing political climate within Central America by going from El Salvador to Nicaragua. Nicaraguan television is produced under a variety of auspices, from state television to independent workshops. The best selections show a rambunctious, if less technically fine, approach to shortages and political aggression from the north. One of these, *¿Que Pasa con el Papel Higenico? (What Happened to the Toilet Paper?)*, was produced by the agrarian reform ministry and details highly uninhibited public criticism of the government's approach to this particularly affecting



The guerilla communications system of El Salvador responds to the bias in government-controlled media reporting by making their own media, as with *Time of Daring*, a partisan look at the war.



Caricature-correspondent Ernesto Varela satirizes television news reporting in his "coverage" of the inauguration of a tribal chief in *Varela in Xingu*.

shortage. Another, *La Virgen Que Suda (The Sweating Virgin)*, was produced by the government television system, Sandinista TV. It is based on an incident much trumpeted by the now closed U.S.-backed newspaper *La Prensa* in which a statue of the Virgin Mary was frozen in a bath in order that she might later appear to be sweating her displeasure at the Sandinistas. It features a rubber-masked Uncle Sam riding his horse south of the border to the strains of "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly." Sam speaks a hilarious Yankee Spanish ("¿Que pasa in Nick-er-ah-gwa?") and exhorts the sultry Ms. La Prensa to do something to ruffle the Sandinistas' relationship with the church. Everybody hams it up in a drama that shows some local people succumbing to greed and deceit while others, in the true spirit of the revolution, uncover the plot and turn them in. The mix of ribald hilarity with state righteousness won't do much to clarify limping debates here about government censorship in Nicaragua. What will clarify that debate is implicit in the tape—the cessation of U.S. military intervention in Nicaragua.

The ravages of the contra war are made explicit in an independent workshop production of stand-up testimonies by people directly affected. Such testimony is essential to any representation of Nicaragua, but this tape suffers in translation from an excess of rhetoric about the need to consolidate the revolution. An entirely different approach to war and oppression comes in the form of a music video from Peru about the disappearances of Indian peasants in the state of Ayacucho. The song is Ruben Blades' "Desaparecidos," an extraordinary lyrical rendering of verses about persons in search of their loved ones. The tape literally applies the lyrics to testimonies given by Indians whose family members have disappeared under violent circumstances. The combination of art and document is seamless. Not so for the producer, who after the appearance of this tape lost his job with Peruvian TV for unauthorized use of file tapes.

According to the exhibition notes, independent video production in Peru barely exists. The two 16mm films included present a more studied approach to Peruvian concerns than much of the video. Both are produced under the auspices of Grupo Chaski, a collective of over 35 filmmakers. *Gregorio* is a feature length fiction about a young Indian boy whose family must migrate to Lima in search of work. The accompanying tragedy of the father's death and Gregorio's gradual evolution into one of a throng of Lima's street kids rings a familiar bell regarding what urban migration does to disenfranchised traditional culture. The strength of this film lies in the determined attention it pays to the look and feel of transience as experienced by the main character.

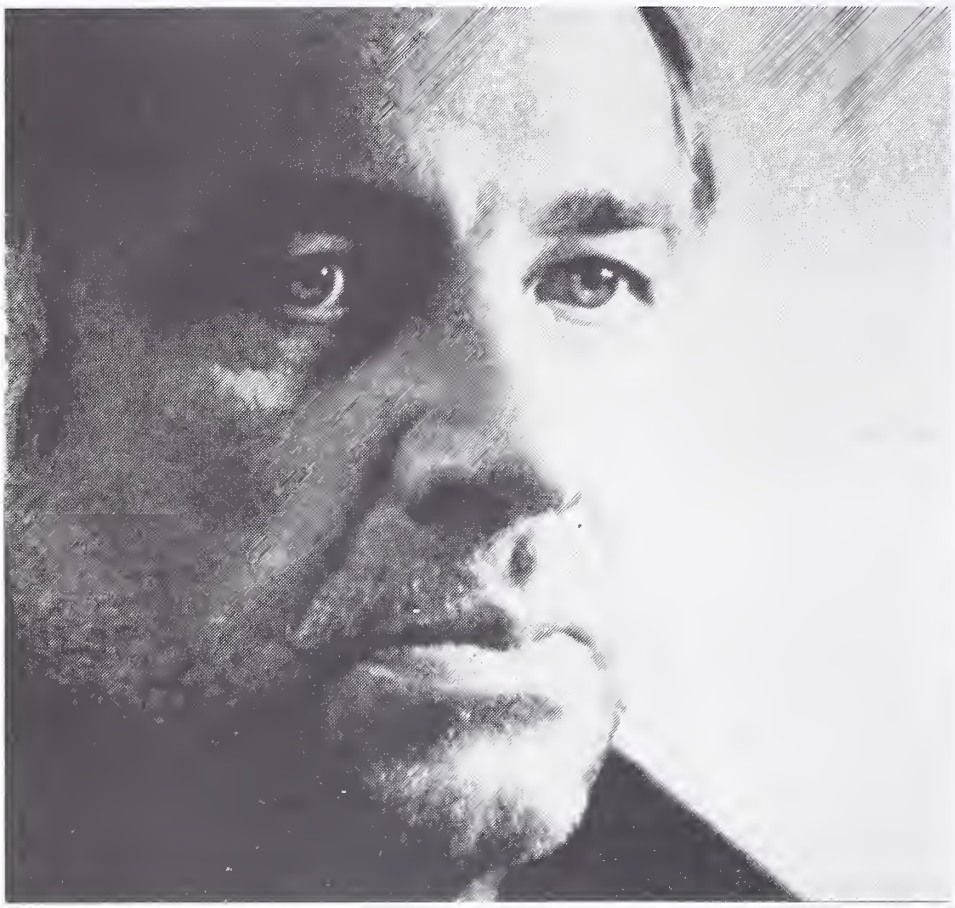
Miss Universe in Peru plays off the simultaneous occurrence of the Miss Universe Contest and a National Conference of Peasant Women in Lima. A number of themes throughout the exhibition surface in this film, which variously interviews peasant women and contestants and plays those interviews against official television statements trumpeting the benefits the contest portends for Peruvian tourism. "It is evidently a commercial enterprise," says the contestant from Chile. "We are here in a congress and want to move forward. Maybe we aren't beautiful, but these women exhibit themselves like animals," says a peasant woman from the conference. "They carry the message of peace," says a representative of the contest, after she has just finished telling a story about Miss Argentina teaching Spanish to Miss Great Britain. All this is interspersed with television spots promoting the good life for blonde women, exploiting Incan heritage as a tourist commodity, and showing contestants rehearsing their routines (among them a Miss Transkei) preparatory to an event that will be attended by all the bigwigs in Lima, including the U.S. ambassador. The careful orchestration between an international television presence, the marketing of women, and the defiance exhibited by indigenous women of Peru deconstructs the meaning of Miss Universe in a way not unlike the full effects of this exhibition.

Democracy in Communication opens doors into the diversity of Latin American productions made in the early 1980s. Its limits as an anthology lie to some extent in the scarcity of accompanying information, concerning both country-by-country political circumstances and the complicated world of communications in North/South relations. The collection's great merits reside in the pioneering effort to create the groundwork for a richly detailed map of popular video and film in Latin America that contributes to a world viewed through the dynamic particulars of the people who inhabit it. In doing so, it rightly presumes upon the intelligence of North American audiences to take note of what they see.

Jane Creighton is a writer living in San Francisco, who is coordinating a series of readings for the "War and Memory Project" of the Washington Project for the Arts.

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THE PICK OF THE CROP: TORONTO'S FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS



Armin Mueller-Stahl in a scene from *The Blind Director*, Alexander Kluge's recent feature that screened at the Toronto Festival of Festivals.

Courtesy Film Society of Lincoln Center

Robert Aaronson

The following interview with Kay Armatage took place during the Toronto Festival of Festivals in September 1986. Armatage is one of the festival's main programmers, along with Piers Handling (special sections and, in 1987, director of programming), David Overby, and Helga Stephenson, who was promoted to festival director in 1987. Stephenson replaces Leonard Schein, who held the position for one year after the departure of S. Wayne Clarkson.

The Festival of Festival's program consists of Gala presentations of new Canadian and foreign films, which then open at Toronto theaters, the large "Perspective Canada" section, special sections such as last year's successful Latin American film retrospective, and, at the heart of the event, the Contemporary World Cinema (CWC) program, where approximately 100 new international features and independent films are screened. At CWC, Toronto audiences have an opportunity to see many films that may otherwise be unavailable; distributors also come to the festival to scout these films. An important adjunct to the Festival of Festivals is the Trade Forum, a three-day business meeting of representatives from the film and television industries, each year based on a different theme.

In 1986 Schein initiated a program called "20/20," a series of dramatic, internationally-produced art films made for popular audiences, which will not be repeated this year. Instead the festival plans include a "Southeast Asian Panorama" of about 40 films.

Robert Aaronson: When do you begin looking for films? In Berlin?

Kay Armatage: Yes.

RA: Do all the programmers see all the films?

KA: We see more than we claim. I saw quite a few of David's films from Berlin, but a lot of the films we just don't get a chance to see. I don't get to Cannes, for instance, so there are hundreds of films that I miss there.

RA: Do you try to fill a certain number of hours? How do you determine when to stop looking?

KA: I suppose we always start the year saying we're going to have no more than 50 films in the Contemporary World Cinema section. And then it ends up—this year, including "20/20"—it's 80 films. We have a certain level that we aim for, but if we've filled up that number and another film comes along and we say, "We've got to show this," then we do.

RA: Do you have a country-by-country quota or goal?

KA: No. Particularly for CWC, we have personal discretion. In Berlin, for instance, David and I see many of the same films. Some films we'll both like, and we trade: who's going to invite this one? We bargain, negotiate numbers and guests and that kind of thing.

RA: What happens, then, if a filmmaker sends a preview tape to David or Leonard?

KA: If he likes it, it will be shown. No individual is the voice of the festival.

RA: On the other hand, a rejection by one programmer is not necessarily the end of the process for a filmmaker?

KA: That's right. In the case of *A Great Wall*, I saw it last year and had extreme reservations about it. Leonard saw it this year and thought we should have it.

RA: Can you tell me your criteria for selecting a film?

KA: I really go out of my way to find films by women. And a third of my choices are films made by women. After that, I look for films that take more formal risks or break more conventions than in well-made conventional drama. So

I look for avant-garde films and unconventional films.

RA: What festivals do you go to during the year?

KA: I just go to Berlin and usually to Filmex. But there was no Filmex this year, so I was hampered in my selection a little. Then I come to New York for a week in early July and probably another day or two later in July There I see a lot of U.S. independent work, plus films that come in after Cannes—*Le Rayon Vert*, for instance.

RA: You're restricted to features of at least 60 minutes for the U.S. selection, is that right?

KA: When I first started five years ago, I was very keen to have short films. But it's as much work to clear customs for a 10-minute film as it is for a feature. Then there's all the preparations, the revising, preparing for the screening, and so on. At a certain point we had to set a policy that we weren't going to have short films, except from Canada. But there are exceptions, like a Chris Marker 10-minute short, I'll show no matter what.

RA: What do you think your audience appreciates most, and do you select films thinking of the audience?

KA: Sure, I pick certain films thinking of certain audiences. For example, three years ago I knew that Sally Potter's *The Gold Diggers* was not going to please a general audience. Probably 200 people in Toronto really want to see that film and will have no other opportunity, so I programmed it whether or not it would sell out the Varsity 2. There are other films that I know many people will like, such as the Rohmer *(Le Rayon Vert)*, which had just won the prize at Venice. Likewise, Doris Dorrie's *Men...* was an enormous crowd pleaser.

I also showed some difficult films last year. I think Trinh Minh-ha's film *(Naked Spaces - Living Is Round)* is very difficult, and Yvonne Rainer's film *(The Man Who Envied Women)* is difficult as well. To some degree I have qualms about showing them. I feel that it's a supermarket here—with huge crowds of people who read the program and pop into a film. If they don't like it within 10 minutes, they leave. And, sometimes, an avant-garde film is more difficult to get into in the first 10 minutes than most Hollywood films. I'm not quite sure whether this is the right context for those films. On the other hand, I think it's very important for the credibility of the festival that those kinds of films be included—that it not be a mainstream festival.

RA: Do you want distributors to come to the festival and look for films that are potentially commercial but don't have a distributor yet?

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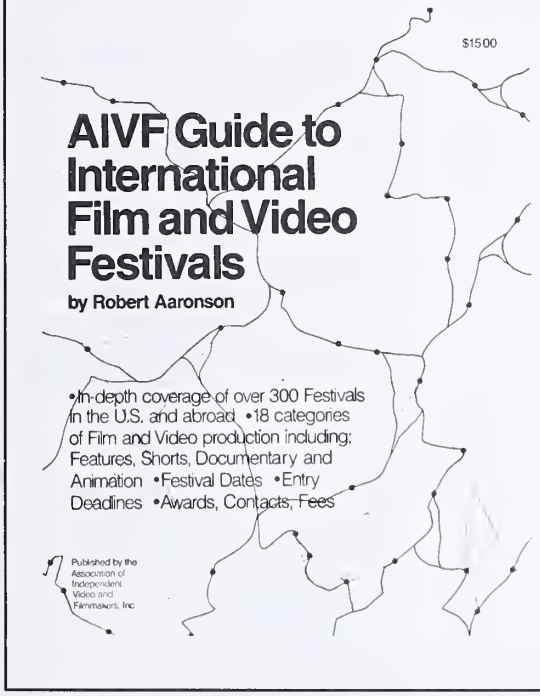
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KA: I don't think about that much. It's an interesting question, though, particularly in relation to Canadian films, and it's something we think of in terms of the international press, for example. But in the selection process, I think much more about the audiences than the industry.

RA: Once the festival begins, how do you define your role in promoting the films you've selected and in helping filmmakers contact people?

KA: I work with the press office as much as I can. I'll sit down with the press officer and go through the entire list of films that I've selected and tell them the things that they can push—the kinds of special interest groups that they may want to contact and that sort of thing. Once the festival gets rolling, I drop into the press office, but either the press is interested in interviewing someone or not. There are a number of writers I know, and I make a point of introducing people to them. Most of the press contact here is either through press conferences or personal interviews. The smaller independent films don't have press conferences unless they hold them themselves, which they are perfectly free to do.

RA: This festival is enormous—almost 300 films. Most of the press is concerned with the big commercial movies. How can a U.S. independent make an impact in Toronto?

KA: It's tough. The filmmaker can do a great deal by being here and working the festival. Personal contact really helps. Even if the film isn't big enough to warrant us using our last Air Canada pass to bring someone here, a hundred bucks can get them here from New York. Eventually, although the daily press mainly covers the galas, there's an enormous amount of both local and international press here. The coverage that comes out after the festival can be very valuable to filmmakers, because they have a chance to get their work analyzed and situated in a context that's a little bit more serious and pays a little bit more attention to the films.

RA: Do you think it's worthwhile hiring a publicist?

KA: Most filmmakers don't. They do their own publicity very well. Barbara Margolis, for example, got the press out, and all she did was stuff mailboxes and wrote little notes to people. She was around and talked to everybody and was pleasant, gracious, well-informed, articulate. And they came out for her film—plus distributors, plus television people that she'd been able to contact here. That's possible for anybody to do. Also, critics love to make discoveries. The films that I think have the least chance of getting noticed are the small independent films with no one here to represent them. An exquisite film can get missed.

There's more international press here than at any festival outside Cannes, say, and Berlin—in North America the most by far—350 from the U.S. press alone. Plus all of the Canadian distributors are here. For those who want to move into the Canadian market, they're just here waiting to snap up films. If they want to try to sell the film to Canadian television, they've just got to make appointments to see them at their offices. The Trade Forum is here, too, with all of the industry people, where they can just buzz in and out at will and make contacts.

RA: The one thing I've heard expressed as a problem here is that screenings overlap. You do screen many films more than once, but there's always another film during the second screening that's having its only showing.

KA: We need more theaters and bigger theaters. Or else we need to show fewer films. Last year we showed about 325 films and were able to repeat every film twice; some were shown three times. People with day passes could see everything; even the galas were repeated in the daytime. This year I think we're showing about 350 films, but there are a substantial number that we can't repeat at all. Last year we had something like 225,000 or 230,000 single admissions, and this year it's already over 240,000, heading up to probably 250,000. And we've got eight theaters, but some of them, like the Cumberland Four, have only 185 seats—it's a joke. For *Hour of the Star* [by Brazilian director Suzana Amaral], I'm sure they turned away twice the number that wanted to go in.

RA: How do you hear about U.S. independent films?

KA: Scouts. People like you. I have a good friend in L.A. who's very interested in documentary and music films, and every year I phone him up or I make a point of taking him out to dinner when I'm in L.A. And I also telephone all the filmmakers I know. When I go to a city like Berlin, L.A., or New York, if I'm not in a screening room I'm having lunch or dinner with somebody who's telling me what they've seen. And in those cases they're always people whose taste I trust. And I never select a film on their recommendations without seeing it, but I have then a sort of hit list of films that I'm out to see. This is particularly helpful to me because I don't go to Cannes.

RA: Do the films have to be completed within a certain time period to qualify for CWC?

KA: In the past we looked for films completed since the last festival, with some exceptions. Films from Indonesia won't get subtitled within the first six months of their completion, and sometimes it takes a year or two years for a film to get out to the rest of the world. But in the past our philosophy was that we either select a film made that year, or if we miss it, if we've made a huge error, that's too bad, like *A Great Wall*. We saw it last year; we turned it down last year. Normally we wouldn't show it a year later. But Leonard's philosophy this year was that he wanted to show as many good films as possible. I think that's one of the reasons that the press, the industry, and distributors are interested in a festival. A disappointment for me this year was that *Seven Women, Seven Sins* wasn't ready for us. Next year will I turn down a film made by Chantal Akerman, Helke Sander, Ulrike Ottinger, Valie Export, Maxi Cohen, Laurence Gavron, Bette Gordon? No, I probably won't.

RA: Do you plan to remain with the festival for the foreseeable future?

KA: I love doing the festival. I love this 10 days. It's such an contrast with my academic life—to get out my rhinestone earrings and to be in show business for a couple of months. But it's hard as well, because I work full-time from September to May and then start work on the festival the first of June. But, in the end, my heart's really in it. And, even though I've been doing it for five years and that may seem like a long time, it takes two or three years to establish the kinds of friendships and contacts and networks. At this point I'm just getting good at it. Also, there are very few women festival programmers around the world. I'm the only woman programming this festival, and it's a big festival.

Robert Aaronson is assistant director of the Artists Sponsorship Program at the New York Foundation for the Arts.

Festival dates: Sept. 10-19, Canada. Over 200 films are screened over 9 days at this fest, which welcomes entries from the US, most of which are programmed in the Contemporary World Cinema section, a survey of current films from around the world, and in the Documentary section. Executive director Helga Stephenson, program director Piers Handling & programmer Kay Armatage will be in NY from June 8-12 to prescreen US entries at the Nat'l Film Board of Canada, 1251 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10021; (212) 586-5131. They will be looking for feature films & docs over one hour, in 35mm or 16mm. No shorts. Films must not have been shown commercially in Canada & should have been completed after Sept. '86. 1/2" & 3/4" OK for preview. Extensive press coverage surrounds the fest, with major US papers & trade journals represented & accredited journalists from 20 countries. No entry fees; fest pays return shipping of films or cassettes sent for selection or exhibition. The fest may in some circumstances cover expenses for filmmakers to attend. Last year's ind films included Jo-Anne Akalaitas' *Dead End Kids*; Barbara Margolis' *Are We Winning, Mommy? America & the Cold War*; Lizzie Borden's *Working Girls*; Sara Driver's *Sleepwalk*, Fielder Cook's *Seize the Day*, Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It* & Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March*. Deadline: July 1. Contact: Piers Handling, program director, Toronto Festival of Festivals, 69 Yorkville Ave., Suite 205, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5R 1B8. (416) 967-7371.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement** & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

ASBURY FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 21-22, New York. 7 yr-old weekend showcase for new 16mm independent short films. Program is "geared toward the unknown or first-time producer whose work is not shown at the big festivals, on PBS or at museums" & films which "provide an accurate look into the world of independent filmmaking." Films should have been completed in the last 5 yrs. Last yr's program incl. Dan Reed's *Tuscola Moon*, Tom Flanagan's *Altar Boy*, Steven Marro's *Boxman* & Nate Hubbard's *Tongue Twisters*. Format: 16mm. Contact: Doug LeClaire, Asbury Film Festival, 15 Parkside Court, Brooklyn, NY 11226; (718) 941-6602.

DANCE ON CAMERA FESTIVAL, Dec. 12-15, New York. Any aspect of the dance expressed on film or video is eligible for this competition, cosponsored by 31 yr-old Dance Films Assoc. & Donnell Media Center. Work must have been completed in the yr prior to fest & should also have a distrib. Last yr's top award winners were Ron Hansa's *The Men Who Danced* & Anthony Mayer's *Kalakshetra*. Other winning independent films incl. Joshua Blum's *Black & White*, Sandy Smolen's *Daytime Moon*, Joan Erskine's *Dolphin Dances*, Barbara Sykes-Dietz' *Kalyian*, Michelle Mahrer's *Xidu* & Bernar Herbert's *Exhibition*. A panel of dance critics, dance professionals, film distributors & producers judges all entries in cats incl. performance, dance company background & history, biography, technique, dance in education, experimental film/video technique, dance history & dance therapy. Entry fees: $15-35. Format: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: July 1. Contact: Susan Braun, executive director, Dance Films Assoc., Rm 301, 241 E. 34th St., New York, NY 10016; (212) 686-7019.

FILM ARTS FESTIVAL: A CELEBRATION OF BAY AREA INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO, Nov. 6-8, San Francisco. W/ its high concentration of ind. film & video makers, the SF Bay Area provides a nurturing environment for films screened at this fest, now in its 3rd yr. Open to N. California film & videomakers & sponsored by Film Arts Foundation, the largest regional membership organization of ind. media artists in the country, the fest programs films thematically according to the submissions received. Last yr 62 works were screened in cats such as "Music Makers: Diverse Harmonies," "In the Neighborhood," "Liberation in the Americas," "Never Discuss Sex, Politics or Religion," "Gay Lives" & "Narrative Variations." Incl. in the program were Juliet Bashore's *Kamikaze Hearts*, Victor Fridman's *Argentina: The Broken Silence*, Wynn Hausser's *Sanctuary: A Question of Conscience*, Tina DiFelicantonio's *Living with Aids*, Chuck Hudina's *Grease*, Craig Baldwin's *RocketKitKongoKit*, Scott Guitteau's *Mother of God*, Ruby Yang's *White Passage* & Mikel Anderson's *Alone in the T-Shirt Zone*. All genres & lengths welcomed. No entry fee. Filmmakers receive fee for screenings. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Contact: Robert Hawk, festival director, Film Arts Festival, 346 9th Street, 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94130; (415) 552-8760.

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF PROGRESSIVE FILM & VIDEO, October, San Francisco. This fest will debut this fall w/ a cross-section of films & videos reflecting a position on social, political, economic, cultural & ethnic conditions, events & issues. Sponsored by the Int'l Network of Progressive Film & Video, a nonprofit, member-supported organization established to promote the use of ind. films & videos as tools against social injustice. A labor segment & Labor Video & Film Cultural Conference are planned, in conjunction w/ the Labor Video Project. Fest endorsed by a number of progressive organizations in the Bay Area. Format: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: $10. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Int'l Network of Progressive Film & Video, Box 4862, San Francisco, CA 94101; (415) 285-8941.

NEW YORK LESBIAN & GAY EXPERIMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 14-21, New York. First-time showcase for avant-garde films by & about lesbians & gay men. In particular, programmers seek works by women & third world filmmakers. Format: 16mm, S-8. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Jim Hubbard, 226 E. 7th St., #1A, New York, NY 10009; (212) 505-1758.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 1-11, San Francisco. 8th annual int'l selection of contemporary video art will feature world premieres, multichannel installations & performances in a newly opened gallery fest home. Last yr's program of 34 videos, selected out of 300 entries, was judged by SF artist Doug Hall, NY videomaker Dara Birnbaum & Boston curator Bob Riley. All participating videos received honorarium of $100. Entry titles incl. Anton Boranich's *Pale of Night*, Nicholas Gorski's *Black Noise*, Amber Denker's *Nagasaki*, Lee Eiferman/Kathy High's *Ena's Adventures, Part One*, Jennifer Grey's *Interiors*, Edward Ankus' *She Heard Voices*, Jon Alpert's *The Philippines: Life, Death & Revolution* & the premiere of Bill Viola's *I Do Not Know What It Is I Am Like*. Selected tapes broadcast on a local PBS station & some tapes may participate in a post-fest tour of US & Europe In both instances, additional honorarium is paid the videomaker. Entry fee: $15. Deadline: July 3. Contact: Steve Seid, San Francisco Video Gallery, 1325 Howard St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 824-9122.

VISIONS OF US, December, Los Angeles. Sponsored by Sony Corp. & administered by the American Film Institute, competition accepts a videomaker's "view of the world" expressed in noncommercial videos up to 30 mins in fiction, experimental, music video & nonfiction categories. Prizes of Sony state-of-the-art equipment go to winners in all cats. Judges last yr incl. Levar Burton, Laurie Anderson, Justine Bateman, Georg Stanford Brown, Francis Coppola, Edward Olmos & Gene Shalit. Top prize-winning videos were Wendell Harris' *Colette Vignette*, Victor Salvas' *Something in the Basement*, Ernest Gusella's *Recollections of Anna St. Asia*, a music video *Boys & Girls*, produced by the Poetry Learning Project of NYC's John Jay HS & Angelica Cruz' *Pete's Steambath*. Awards are presented at the National Video Festival. Format: 1/2", Beta, 8mm videocassettes; interformat editing allowed. Work must have originated on tape. Deadline: Oct. 1. Contact: Visions of U.S., Box 200, Hollywood, CA 90078; (213) 856-7745.

FOREIGN

BRISTOL ANIMATION FESTIVAL, Oct. 27-Nov. 1, England. Formerly the Cambridge Animation Festival, this int'l ASIFA-endorsed noncompetitive event will be held at Britain's Watershed media center & will feature several screenings, exhibitions, workshops, demonstrations & guest speakers. Program is based on a number of themes, which this yr will incl. a look at the varied methods & new techniques of animation production, comedy in animation & works relating to the European Year of the Environment. Entries are normally by invitation. Preview cassettes may be submitted. Fest will only pay for return of preview entries, by 2nd class or surface mail. Deadline: July 31. Contact: Irene Kotlartz, festival director, Animation Festival Office, 79 Wardour St., London W1V 3PH; (01) 734-2076.

FESTIVAL DEI POPOLI INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF SOCIAL DOCUMENTARY FILM, Nov. 27-Dec. 5, Italy. The 25th yr of this festival, which features a wide cross-section of serious social, political & historical issue docs, will incl. traditional competition, information & retrospective sections, as well as a "Cinema & Rock" section documenting significant moments in rock music history. The docs in competition are chosen after being screened at the fest; the int'l jury determines 3 awards w/ cash prizes ranging from 5,000,000 lira to 20,000,000 lira. The retrospective this yr focuses on 1944-1946 through newsreels, docs, narrative film footage & TV programs; a selection of Dutch ethno/anthropological docs will also be presented. Last yr's fest showed 160 entries from 20 countries, w/ special emphasis on the third world. 15 films selected for competition were judged by a jury consisting of film director Carlo Lizzani, Sorbonne prof Edgar Morin, German film critic Walfron Schutte. US anthropologist/filmmaker Jay Ruby & Colin Young of the Edinburgh Film Festival. Among numerous US entries screened were *All American High*, by Keva Rosenfeld; *Broken Rainbow*, by Victoria Mudd & Maria Florio; *Directed by William Wyler*, by Aviva Slesin; *Do Not Enter: The Visa War against Ideas*, by Robert Richter; *Sons of Shiva*, by Robert Gardner; *A Weave of Time*, by Susan Fanshel; *Machito: A Latin Jazz Legacy*, by Carlos Ortiz; *Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima*, by John Junkerman & *Loving Krishna*, by Allen Moore & Akos Kostor. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4" for TV productions. Deadline: October. Contact: Mario Simondi, secretary general, Festival dei Popoli, Via Fiumi 14, 50123 Florence, Italy; tel: (055) 294353, telex 575615-FESTIP.

GHENT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF FLANDERS, Oct. 7-17, Belgium. The annual theme of the competitive section of this fest, now in its 14th yr, is "the impact of music on film" & it invites films in which music is the major component. 12 entrants vie for 3 awards of $1500 each, in cats of best soundtrack, best musical & best musical doc or narrative film.. Last yr's int'l jury, headed by Belgian animation filmmaker Raoul Servais, awarded Paul Cox' *My First Wife* w/ the best soundtrack prize & Ry Cooder won for his score of *Crossroads*, by Walter Hill. Films out of competi-

tion in the main section of the fest may be awarded Filmtrak awards, sponsored by a British film music production company, in which top prize of $1000 goes to best score unpublished & unreleased as a record & other prizes go to winners in the cats of best overall sound, song/theme & composer. Sections focus on national language films: Latin America, Eastern Europe, Far East, English, Spanish, German & French. Other special events incl. retrospectives, homages & silent movies w/ live orchestral performances. Last yr, 40,000 attended the screenings of 130 films from 30 countries. Films in competition must be over 50 mins & completed in '86 or '87, unless they have not been commercially released in Belgium. All other films have no completion date requirements. Format: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Ronnie Pede, festival programmer, International Film Festival of Flanders-Ghent, Het Communicatiehuis, Kortrijksesteenweg 1104B-9820, Ghent, Belgium; tel. (91) 252512, telex 12750.

Haifa International Film Festival, Oct. 10-14, Israel. Considered the annual meeting of Israeli film industry professionals, fest occurs during Jewish holiday Sucoth & screens features w/ Hebrew subtitles, new directors' films seeking commercial Israeli distribution, Israeli film premieres, foreign shorts & animation films. Fest receives heavy local press coverage. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 30. Contact: Amos Fogel, Haifa 4th International Film Festival, 142, Hanassi Ave., Haifa, Israel; tel: (04) 386246, telex 46787 PGING IL.

Huesca International Contest of Short Films, November, Spain. This competitive fest, organized to promote the exposure of short films in the Spanish market, has int'l, retrospective & informative sections. Films entered cannot have received awards in other Spanish fests, must have been completed in the preceding yr & be under 45 mins & Spanish subtitled. For selected entries, a Spanish translation of all required texts must be supplied. All themes are welcome, save tourism & publicity. Entrants pay round trip shipping & insurance. Awards incl. top prize, the Golden Danzante, a cash prize of 300,000 Pts. & prizes for narrative, animation & doc achievement. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Sept. Contact: Certamen Internacional de Films Cortos, Ciudad de Huesca, Ricardo del Arco, 6, 22003 Huesca, Spain; tel: (974) 227058.

Kijkhuis World Wide Video Festival, September, The Hague. 6th edition of this all-video production fest will present tapes, installations & performances. Last yr's selection of almost 100 tapes rounded out continuous program shown nonstop over 6 days. US participants incl. James Byrne, Tony Labat, Dara Birnbaum, Laura Kipnis, Andre Burke, Richard Bloes & Susan Rynard, w/ installations by Tony Oursler, Morifumi Arimura, Giorgio Cattani & Carles Pujol. Following the fest's run, it was presented in NYC as part of Media Alliance annual conference, which dubbed it "the equivalent of the New York Film Festival" for ind. video artists. The Kijkhuis is a screening, exhibition & distrib facility. Format: 3/4". Deadline: July 1. Call before sending in entries. Contact: Tom Van Vliet, Kijkhuis World Wide Video Festival, Noordeinde 140 2514 GP Den Haag, Netherlands; tel: (070) 644805.

Leipzig International Documentary & Short Film Week for Film & TV, Nov. 20-26, German Democratic Republic. This is East Germany's primary int'l film event & has historically featured politically oriented docs focusing on world peace, socialism, social progress & human dignity. Special support has been given to third world filmmakers & themes. 1987 will mark the 30th yr of the fest, which last yr showed a total of 490 films, w/ 68 in competition. A new noncompetitive video sidebar section is growing quickly. Awards are offered in feature, short & animation/other cats in amounts ranging from 2500 DM to 5000 DM. Top prizes last yr went to Wolfgang Pfeiffer's *Joe Polowsky: An American Dreamer*, Miguel Littins' *Acta General de Chile* & Dennis O'Rourke's *Half Life*. Fest's program incl. competition, informational & retrospective sections, as well as a concurrent market. The competition section incl., in addition to doc films & TV reports, reconstructed documentations, sections of journalistic TV mags & animation. Jonathon Miller of Icarus Films, 200 Park Ave. S., #1319, New York, NY 10003, (212) 674-3375, is the fest's US contact. He will preselect & have info/appl. forms available. Selected films sent to GDR by diplomatic pouch for final selection. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4" for preselection. Deadline: July 15. Festival deadline: Sept. 30. Festival address: Komitee Internationale Leipziger Dokumentar und Kurzfilmwochen fur Kino und Fernsehen, DDR-1055 Berlin, Chodowieckistr. 32; tel: 4300617.

London Film Festival, Nov. 12-29, England. The 31st edition is newly headed by Sheila Whitaker, formerly of the British National Film Theater, who has expressed a commitment to incl. US independents in fest on a consistent basis. Fest is invitational, w/ many of the films having been seen by programmers at other film fests. In fact, prospective entrants are encouraged to inform the fest of others in which their films are showing prior to Aug. & before sending entries to London so that the programmers may schedule viewings at the fests they attend. Films should be over 65 mins; for shorter films, send info & special invites may be extended. All entries must be British premieres. Last yr, more than 150 films screened at 9 venues before audiences of over 70,000, w/ a wealth of US ind. entries, incl. Aviva Slesin's *Directed by William Wyler*, Robert Mugge's *Saxophone Colossus*, Frederick Wiseman's *Deaf & Blind*, Lizzie Borden's *Working Girls*, Jerome Gary's *Stripper*, Robert Gardner's *Forest of Bliss*, Louis Malle's *God's Country*, Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It*, Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March*, Josh Waletzky's *Partisans of Vilna*, Frank D. Gilroy's *The Gig*, Peggy Stern's *Stephanie: Five Years Later*, Keva Rosenfeld's *All American High* & films by Doris Chase. Fest is noncompetitive but awards the prestigious British Film Institute prize for the most original & imaginative film, which last yr went to *Comrades*, by Bill Douglas. Director Whitaker will be at Independent Feature Market in Oct. in NYC & can be contacted there. No entry fees. Format: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm; 3/4" & 1/2" for preview. Fest will pay shipping on invited cassettes. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact before sending entries: London Film Festival, National Film Theater, South Bank, London SE1 8XT, England; tel: (01) 4374355; telex 27624.

Mannheim International Film Week, Oct. 5-10, Germany. Celebrating its 36th anniversary, this fest programs films "whose contents & form show new developments": first features, docs, animated & short fiction. Films may compete in several sections: the "Grand Prix of Mannheim," w/ cash award of DM 10,000, goes to a first fiction film over 60 mins. Other cash awards range from DM 2000 to DM 3500 & go to winning films distinguished by socio-political commitment & originality. Films made by third world filmmakers qualify for special prize emphasizing depictions of self-determination, resourcefulness & int'l solidarity. Entries must be German premieres & unshown in competition in other European fests. Films premiering at Mannheim will receive special consideration. Fest pays round trip shipping for selected entries. As she has for the past several yrs, director Fee Vaillant will be in NYC from July 25 at the AIVF offices to prescreen fest entries. AIVF will then arrange a group shipment to Germany of selected films. Last yr, Vaillant screened almost 70 films, selecting John Junkerman/John Dower's *Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima*; Andres Racz' *Dolce Patria*, Jeffrey Skoller's *Nicaragua Hear Say See Hear* & Nina Menkes' *Magdalena Viraga: Story of a Red Sea Crossing*. Format: 35mm, 16mm; 3/4" or 1/2" for preselection. For entry forms, send SASE to AIVF, Mannheim Selection, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. The deadline for entries in New York is July 1. Fest deadline: Aug. 15. Fest address: XXXVI Internationale Filmwoche Mannheim, Rathaus, E5, D-6800 Mannheim 1, W. Germany; tel: 06212932745, telex 463423 STVMA D.

Montreal International Festival of New Cinema & Video, Oct. 22-Nov. 1, Canada. As an alternative to more commercial fests, this was established as a "forum of progressive & innovative cinema," making it a natural showcase for US ind. films & videos. Director Claude Chamberlan is interested in expanding the number of unusual works from the US & will be in contact w/ the AIVF offices in Aug. to solicit recommendations. Last yr, the program incl. 52 features, 19 shorts & 86 videos from 19 countries, w/ a good number of US ind. productions represented. Mark Rappaport's *Chain Letters*, Spike Stewart's *D.U.I.*, Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It*, Nina Menkes' *Magdalena Viraga: Story of a Red Sea Crossing*, Rachel Reichman's *Riverbed*, Glenn Silber/Claudia Vianello's *Troupers*, Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March* & Richard Lerner/Lewis MacAdams' *What Happened to Kerouac?* were in feature section; the shorts program incl. Christine Mehner's *Beethoven's 5th*, Ericka Beckman's *Cinderella*, Leandro Katz' *The Visit* & Robert Frank's *Pull My Daisy*. Over 20 US video artists participated, among them Andre Burke, Alex Roshuk, Mariel Odenbach, Nam June Paik, Doug Hall, Bill Viola, Burt Barr, Bill Seaman, George Kuchar, Joan Logue, Edward Rankus, Dara Birnbaum & David Daniels. Quebec critics' award for feature & short films & jury award for video production are offered. Film & video market is part of the fest. Entry fees: $50 film, $15 video. Entrant pays round trip shipping fees. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Claude Chamberlan, executive director, Festival International du Nouveau Cinema et de la Video de Montreal, 3724 St. Laurent Blvd., Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 2V8; (514) 843-4725/4711, telex 5560074.

Montreal World Film Festival, Aug. 21-Sept. 1, Canada. Invitational competitive fest for feature & short films, recognized by IFFPA. Sections: official competition, hors concours (noncompetitive), British cinema, Latin American cinema, new trends, tributes & cinema & peace. Very large audiences. A concurrent film, TV & video market focuses on recent & unreleased films. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July

11. Contact: Serge Losique, fest director, Montreal World Film Festival, 1455 Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3G 1M8; (514) 848-3883, telex 05-25472.

NYON INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 10-18, Switzerland. Contemporary social & political issues presented in innovative ways dominate the content of films selected for this fest, which has been in existence for almost 2 decades. Psychological, cultural & religious themes also welcomed. Three juries judge all entries. The main int'l jury, composed of cinema professionals & scholars, awards the top prize Gold Sesterce, as well as determining the winner of the $1500 Prix de Suisse Romande, donated by a Swiss TV station. There is also an ecumenical jury, which awards films for their treatment of moral & ethical issues & a public jury of 15-20 local members, who select the best of fest. Preference given to world premieres or films which have not participated in other Euro. fests. Last yr 3 US ind. films received commendations: *Isaac in America: A Journey with Isaac Bashevis Singer*, by Amram Nowak; *The Mexican Tapes*, by Louis Hock & *For Auction: An American Hero*, by Robert Drew. Other US entries incl. Maxi Cohen's *Anger*, Aviva Slesin's *Directed by William Wyler*, Robert Gardner's *Forest of Bliss*, Marc Huestis/Wendy Dallas' *Chuck Solomon: Coming of Age*; David Maysles/Albert Maysles/Charlotte Zwerin's *Islands*, Joan Goss' *Wild Life* & Vivian Schaefer's *You Can Fight City Hall*. All participating filmmakers who attend receive hotel & hospitality from the fest. Both film & video welcomed; video projection facilities reportedly very good. Festival director Erika de Hadeln, along with her husband Moritz de Hadeln & Manfred Salzgeber of the Berlin Film Festival (he is a consultant to Nyon) will be in NYC in mid-July to screen entries, w/ the assistance of NY rep Gordon Hitchens. Films must have been completed in the 12 mos prior to fest. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Sept 1. Contact: Gordon Hitchens, 215 W. 85th Street, #3W, New York, NY 10024, (212) 877-6856/362-0254. Festival address: Nyon International Documentary Film Festival, Case Postale 98, CH-1260, Nyon, Switzerland; tel: (022) 616060, telex: 28163 ELEF CH.

RIOFEST: INTERNATIONAL FILM, TELEVISION & VIDEO FESTIVAL, November, Brazil. Sponsored by Brazilian Assoc. of Film Producers & now in 4th yr, this fest presents a wide ranging program of over 200 films & videos, as well as seminars, special exhibits, retrospectives & market w/ buyers from 30 countries. Last yr's official competition showcased 16 features judged by an int'l jury incl. Brazilian filmmaker Carlos Diegues, Japanese director Nagisa Oshima, Erato president Toscan du Plantier, Polish director Jerzy Kawalerowsky & Nat'l Film Board of Columbia (FOCINE) head Maria Emma de Mejia. Other fest offerings incl. a "best in the world" section, featuring films which won prizes at other int'l festivals; an "informative showing," examining recent productions from several countries; a parallel showing of "midnight movies" (underground & experimental); a women's panorama of new feature & short productions; a Brazilian film retrospective; tributes to Portuguese cinema, Raul Ruiz, Mexican films by Luis Bunuel, Roger Vadim & the French Film Archives. A short film competition section judged 7 films. The official video competition featured over 100 works in music, fiction, journalism, animation & experimental cats. Parallel showing screened videos on many subjects, incl. science, Italian work-

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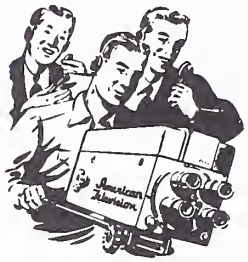
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ers' movement, children's TV, ind. Latin American work, Italian experimental, dance & women's productions. US participants incl. Laurie Anderson's *Home of the Brave*, Chantal Akerman/Ulrike Ottinger/Helke Sander/Bette Gordon/Maxi Cohen/Laurence Gavron/Valie Export's *Seven Women, Seven Sins*, videos by Wendy Clarke & Shirley Clarke, Larry Cohen's *Perfect Strangers & Q: The Winged Serpent*, Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It*, Richard Wilson's production of Orson Welles' *It's All True: Four Men on a Raft*, Edward Zwick's *About Last Night* & David Byrne's *True Stories*. Many films screened at this fest had already been shown elsewhere, w/ some in commercial distribution, but were new to local audiences. Feature & short films in the official competition must be 35mm, not entered in other major fests & Portuguese subtitled. Prizes are a Golden Tucano for best feature, w/ other awards for best director, actor/actress & short film. The video sections are musical, doc, fiction (all under 60 mins), cartoons (under 15 mins) & experimental. Format: 35 mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 30. Fest address: Festival Internacional de Cinema, Televisao e Video do Rio de Janeiro, General Management, Hotel Nacional, Rio, Av. Niemeyer 769, 22450 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; tel: (021) 322-2860/322-2850, telex: (021) 22084 ETUR BR.

SAN SEBASTIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 17-27, Spain. Having regained its competitive "A" category from the FIAPF (Int'l Producers Federation) in '85 after 5 yrs w/o, San Sebastian now enters its 35th anniv. yr w/ plans to again join the ranks of Europe's major fests. Program consists of major competition section (20 films last yr; the only US entry was Dan Bessie's *Hard Travelling*) & an Open Zone/New Directors section, to which the CIGA hotel chain has contributed a $40,000 award. Other sidebars in 1986 honored Luise Rainer, combined live orchestral music w/ Von Stroheim's *Greed*, screened new Brazilian films & focused on a series of Mexican films. US ind. films *Riverbed*, by Rachel Reichman & *Parting Glances*, by Bill Sherwood, competed in the Open Zone. San Sebastian programs only features on film, however, it also may show shorts under 30 mins, preferably in 35mm, to precede features in the competitive section. Films must have been produced in the yr preceding the festival, not shown in other competitive festivals & Spanish subtitled. There is a parallel film & TV mart. Wendy Lidell is the US rep. In early July she will host fest director Diego Galan in NY as he makes selections. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July. Contact: Wendy Lidell, 125 E. 4th St., New York, NY 10012; (212) 475-8237, telex: 226078 AEGISUR. Fest address: Festival Internacional de Cine de San Sebastian, Box 397, 20080 San Sebastian, Spain; tel: (43) 429625, telex: 38145-FCSS E.

SITGES INTERNATIONAL FANTASY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 2-12, Spain. Located in elegant summer resort town, this fest of horror & sci-fi films will celebrate its 20th anniv. this yr. Last yr it featured a large number of celebrity guests. Program incl. *Big Trouble in Little China, Aliens, The Fly, Blue Velvet, Psycho III* & *House*. Program serves as launching pad for Euro. release of some films. Deadline: August. Contact: Joan Luis Goas, Sitges Foto Film, Calle San Isidro 12, Box 93, Sitges, Spain; tel: (93) 894-1306.

UPPSALA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct 16-25, Sweden. Last yr 105 shorts & 25 features from 35 countries made up the fest program held in Uppsala, home of Sweden's oldest univ. The lineup incl. section devoted to series of features & shorts by US ind. filmmakers presenting "a different picture of the US." Another section entitled "One Planet/Two Worlds," dedicated to Olof Palme, focused on films that explored the gaps between the third world & industrialized countries; Lorraine Gray's *Global Assembly Line* was featured in this section. US ind. filmmakers Debra Epstein & Tom Flanagan attended w/ their films *Czechs & Balances* & *Altar Boy* respectively. No fee. Format: 35mm, 16mm; 3/4", 1/2" for preview. Cats: fiction, doc, animated, experimental. Deadline: Aug. 20. Contact: Uppsala Film Festival, Box 1746, 75147 Uppsala, Sweden; tel: (46) 018 103010, telex: 76020.

The FIVF Festival Bureau has established a tape library of members' current works to expedite screenings for upcoming film and video festivals. Members interested in depositing their work in the library should contact: Kathryn Bowser, Festival Bureau director, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. 1/2" and 3/4" tapes will be accepted.

CORRECTION

The "Notices" section of the April issue contained a typographical error resulting in unintended confusion. The grants to applicants for the Film Fund's 1986 cycle disbursed by Media Grants, an independent consulting firm established by Lillian Jimenez, were inadvertently listed as NYSCA Media Grants. We apologize for any misunderstanding or inconvenience this mistake produced.

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For an application, write Ethan Young, Membership Services, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012.



A blackface minstrel routine forms a part of indigenous culture of racism in the U.S., critiqued in Marlon Rigg's documentary *Ethnic Notions.*
Photo: Bob Hsiang

Renee Tajima

Animator and experimental filmmaker Chel White has just completed his new film short, **Jump Cut**, a collage of dance movement, eroticism, and the subliminal. According to White, *Jump Cut* is an attempt to bridge the gap between experimental film and music video. In the film White places emphasis on a strong sound/image relationship, achieved through the rhythmic rapid cutting of imagery and the synchronicity of editing. The soundtrack is performed by Chris and Cosey, a British underground electronic music group formerly with Throbbing Gristle. *Jump Cut* will be shown on *Frontal Exposure*, the independent film and video series programmed by KQED, San Francisco's public television station. *Jump Cut*: Chel White Films, Box 15266, Portland, OR 97215; (503) 235-9063.

Out of the George Lucas Building at the University of Southern California film school, known for the more flamboyant film exploits of its alumnae and alumni, comes a sensitive and haunting documentary about the homeless. **In the Wee Wee Hours**, a 20-minute documentary by Izak Ben-Meir, travels the disturbing nighttime urban landscape of Los Angeles' Skid Row. In it Ben-Mier allows the homeless to speak for themselves. The main narrator is a former fighter pilot and POW who ended up on Skid Row when he was unable to adjust to civilian life. Other characters discuss their constant fear and alienation as the film descends deeper into the night, on street corners, at the Union Rescue Mission, and in the dwelling that the homeless have built by hand. Music for *In the Wee Wee Hours* is performed by Blazing Berry with J.J. Bad Boy Homes and the Bad Boys. *In the Wee Wee Hours*: Izak Ben-Mier, 307 Marine St., Apt. C, Santa Monica, CA 90405-5441; (213) 399-1996.

The 28-minute film **How to Shoot a Crime** represents a collaboration of filmmaker Chris Kraus and semiotician Sylvere Lotringer. It is a film about death and cities, intercutting interviews with two dominatrixes, a police videographer, actual crime footage, and a simulated murder shot at the edge of the Fulton Street Seaport area of New York City. Kraus describes the film as part autobiography, part rock video, and part political documentary. Much of the archival footage was gathered by Lotringer, the editor of *Semiotext(e)*, including the interviews and crime footage. The material was then recomposed by Kraus, edited at a harsh and aggressive clip similar to quick cuts on TV. According to the filmmaker, the provocative work-in-progress was "banned" at Film/Video Arts, where technicians refused to work on any aspect of it, and postproduction had to be completed at another low-cost New York editing facility. *How to Shoot a Crime*: Chris Kraus, 89 Bowery, 5th fl., New York, NY 10002; (212) 431-7173.

Kim L. Wilson and Kelly Candaele have just completed their first documentary, **A League of Their Own**, a film about the All American Girls Professional Baseball League. The 30-minute film follows the League from its genesis in 1943, when Chicago Cubs owner P.K. Wrigley organized it to fill the vacuum left by male baseball players who had gone off to war. Wilson and Candaele frame the story within a weekend reunion of surviving players in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The women remember roadtrips, where they endured almost 120 games per season, and the Helena Rubenstein School of Charm, where they were instructed in maintaining a "feminine appearance." They were required to wear skirts designed by Wrigley's wife and played for teams throughout the Midwest with names like the Kenosha Comets, the Racine Belles, and the Rockford Peaches. But the women played tough, hard-hitting baseball. Candaele's mother, Helen Callaghan, was the League's 1945 batting champion, and eventually taught her son Casey, now a second basemen for the Montreal Expos, how to play ball. Says Callaghan, "They may have initially come out to see our pretty legs, but when they saw us play they kept coming back because we played damn good baseball." *A League of Their Own* was aired nationally on the Public Broadcasting Service and will be

made available on videocassette later this year. *A League of Their Own:* K&K Productions, 441 1/2 N. Genesee, Los Angeles, CA 90036; (213) 655-6766.

Director Eric Mofford and producer Keith Crofford are now in postproduction on **Travelin' Trains**, a dramatic film based on Mofford's own script about a Southern boy's search for his father. *Travelin' Trains* is set in Depression-era Georgia. Andre Wiggins plays Sam, the youth who sets out to find a father who has become well-known along the southern railway as "The Snowman," a white blues musician "in a world too appropriately blue." On the road, Sam learns of music, racism, hard times, and his own destiny. Crofford and Mofford have already completed principal photography on *Travelin' Trains* with support from Appalshop, the Georgia Council for the Arts, the City of Atlanta, and Fulton County. They are currently seeking financing to complete the feature-length film. *Travelin' Trains:* Eric Mofford, 596 Milledge Ct., S.E., Atlanta, GA 30312; (404) 659-2281.

A **Singing Stream**, the story of a remarkable black family from the rural South, has been completed by Virginia-based filmmaker Tom Davenport and folklorists Daniel Patterson and Allen Tullos. The 57-minute film traces the history of the Landis family of Granville County, North Carolina, over the lifetime of its oldest surviving member, 86 year-old Bertha M. Landis. Mrs. Landis used the musical gifts of her family, religious faith, and black cultural traditions to unite, discipline, and motivate her children. The musical performances in the film span almost a century, from unaccompanied shape-note singing to contemporary gospel, including the male quartet the Golden Echoes, which includes three Landis family members. The film took over five years to produce, and is the fourth in a series of documentary films entitled "American Traditional Cultures Series," which is coproduced by the Curriculum in Folklore at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. *A Singing Stream* was awarded a top prize by the National Black Programming Consortium in the Prized Pieces Competition. *A Singing Stream:* Davenport Films, RR1, Box 527, Delaplane, VA 22025; (703) 592-3701.

Marlon T. Riggs has earned the Best Documentary Award at the 1987 San Francisco International Film Festival for **Ethnic Notions**, his long-awaited documentary about racial tension and popular culture in the United States. Narrated by stage and television actress Esther Rolle, the one-hour video examines black American caricatures—Coon, Mammy, Uncle, Pickaninny, and Sambo—and illustrates how these images shaped and mirrored changing attitudes toward race. *Ethnic Notions* traverses more than 100 years of racial stereotyping, interweaving fiction, folklore, theater, music, animation, newsreel footage, and interviews. Taking stock images like Amos 'n' Andy, Steppin' Fetchit, and Buckwheat, which dominated American television and movie screens for years, Riggs shows how the popular media wrought incalculable harm on black Americans. *Ethnic Notions* provides a historical foundation for critical understanding of racism in popular culture. According to Riggs, "Part of the point of this documentary is to get people to think about any stereotypes of people as they exist today." *Ethnic Notions:* California Newsreel, 630 Natoma St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 621-6196.



Sam arrives at the hobo jam, a scene from Eric Mofford and Keith Crofford's feature film *Travelin' Trains*.

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CLASSIFIEDS

The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy ○ Rent ○ Sell," "Freelancers" & "Post-production" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$15 per issue.** Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear.

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FOR SALE: 6-Plate Steenbeck, Model ST 900W. Maintained by Cinergy, records available. Rewind plate, core-holders, audio output jack & other extras. $7,500. Call (212) 265-1157.

FOR SALE: Steenbeck (16mm, 6-plate). Good condition. Reasonably priced. Call (212) 924-0400, ask for Andy.

FOR SALE: ACL 400' mag $900, 200' mags $350, ACL body w/ perf. optics & movement for field spare $1000 or BO. Sony TC-D5 synch recorder, resolver $975. Hot splicer $175, Movie-Scope $150, Hollywood rewinds $100. Call Ken, (206) 285-3057.

FOR SALE: Arri 16BL camera package. 2 400' mags, offset viewfinder, matte box, batt. belt, cases. Angenieux zooms 9.5-95mm w/ blimp, 12-120mm, 10-150mm, O'Connor 50 head & tripod. Must sell. Call Mark, (212) 645-2057.

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COMPOSER Robert Mitchell has written music for filmmaker/producer Joseph Feury, this year's Academy Award winner for "best documentary" with *Down and Out in America*, broadcast on HBO. Let him score your next feature or documentary film. (212) 799-3257. 205 W.E.A. Suite 23-H, NYC 10023.

PUBLICIST w/ 5 yrs exp as independent, 3 yrs w/ p.r. firms. Preprod. thru NY & LA openings, incl. unit publicity. Press kits/releases, media campaigns. Ind. credits incl. *Gringo*, *Before Stonewall*, *Gospel*, & *Athens, Ga.: Inside/Out*. Publicity for TV shows avail. Reasonable rates. Consultation provided. Jeffrey Wise Publicity, 507 E. 12 St, #2B, NYC 10009, (212) 460-8373.

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The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the Governor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., June 8 for the August/September issue. Send notices to Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences • Workshops

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF MEDIA ARTS CENTERS annual conference, June 16-18, Vista Hotel, New York City. Will concentrate on distribution of independent media. For information, contact: Carmen Ashurst, c/o EFLA, 45 John St., Suite 301, New York, NY 10038; (212) 227-6989/(718) 773-1163.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER offers introductory workshops in TV prod. & intermediate editing w/ 3/4" & VHS; video prod. equipment; editing & dubbing facilities on Beta, VHS & 3/4" & screening facility. Contact: DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10018; (212) 966-4510.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF LOCAL CABLE PROGRAMMERS: 1987 National Convention, July 16-18, Chicago Hilton & Towers. This yr's theme, "Community Programming: Voices of Diversity," to incl. over 100 workshops & discussion sessions covering local programming mgmt., funding, promotion, training & prod., issues in govt. cable policy & constituency sessions. Also showcase of local programming, exhibit area & Hometown USA Video Festival awards night. Contact: NFLCP, 906 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Washington, DC 10003; (202) 544-7272.

FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE CABLE TV: Spring Education series incl. workshops in California's Oakland & Orange counties: "Long Range Planning for the Local Channel," June 10 (Oakland) & June 4 (Orange Co.) & "Cable Boards, Commissions & Advisory Committees," June 13 (Oakland) & June 6 (Orange Co.). Contact: Foundation for Community Service Cable TV, 5010 Geary Blvd., Ste. 3, San Francisco, CA 94118; (415) 387-0200.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY: School of Continuing Education Filmmaking Program noncredit courses: "Making a Living as a Director," June 18; "Home Video: Independent Development, Production & Distribution," June 13; "Filmmaking: Techniques & Technology," June 8-July 22; "Film Production I," July 7-Aug. 6. Free career seminar offered June 2, incl. special student film screening. Contact: NYU, School of Continuing Education Filmmaking Program, 326 Shimkin Hall, 50 W. 4th St., New York, NY 10003; (212) 598-2116.

GREAT LABOR ARTS EXCHANGE: 3-day workshop incl. workshops on writing, performing & promoting labor culture; developing skits & cultural programs for union mtgs & more. Presented by the Labor Heritage Foundation at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies near Washington, DC. Contact: Labor Heritage Foundation, 815 16th St., NW, Rm. 301, Washington, DC 20006; (202) 842-7880.

Films • Tapes Wanted

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION: Open solicitation for film/video artists for the 1988 Southern Circuit, a tour of 6 artists who will present screenings in 7 southern cities. Submit printed material only, incl. resume & publicity for round one of selection process. Deadline: July 3, 1987. Send materials to: SCAC Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201, Attn: Susan Leonard, exhibition coordinator.

NATIVE AMERICAN PUBLIC BROADCASTING CONSORTIUM seeks video & film productions by, for, or about Native Americans as possible addition to videotape library. Send tapes to: NAPBC, Program/Project Director, Box 83111, Lincoln, NE 68501.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS invites film, video & filmstrip entries for annual Media Awards Competition. Categories focus on human development across life span, parenting issues, marital & family issues & communication, alcohol & drug abuse, human reproduction & family planning, stress, transition & crisis mgmt., social issues, abuse & neglect, and special needs. Contact: MAC Coordinator, Nat'l Council on Family Relations, 1910 W. County Rd., B, Ste. 147, St. Paul, MN 55113.

Opportunities • Gigs

RELIABLE EDITORS needed for cable series of training tapes that will enable people to launch their own videomovie, performance sport, home theater, topical cabaret, etc. using techniques tested since 1953 Chicago COMPASS. VHS or Beta One. Contact: David Shepherd, Group Creativity Inc., Box 70, #2 Washington Sq. Village, New York, NY 10012; (212) 777-7830, mssgs (212) 420-9402.

FILM IN THE CITIES is now accepting apps for a 1-yr NEA internship in film, video & performance exhibition. Begins Sept. 2 w/ yearly stipend of $11,500. App. deadline: July 13. Send letters, resumés & list of 3 references to: Film in the Cities, 2388 University Ave., St. Paul, MN 55114.

POSITION AVAILABLE: Film prod. facilities manager. Responsible for policy development, managing student use & expediting maintenance of film prod. facility incl. 16 mm equip. BA & professional experience in film prod. required as well as strong managerial & interpersonal skills. Salary: $19-21,000. Send resumé & 3 letters of recommendation to: Leighton Pierce, Dept. of Communication Studies, Univ. of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242.

WANTED: Man to teach basic video to imprisoned & at-risk youth. Part-time, paid position that will incl. working w/ youth as video instructor, asst. theater & circus arts instructor (will train qualified applicant) & admin. activities. Possibility of working on video

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docs. Resumes to: Sidewalks of New York Prods, Box 968, Old Chelsea Sta., New York, NY 10113.

POSITION AVAILABLE: Director, Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center. Oversee artistic & fiscal direction of organization; supervise & recruit professional curatorial & administrative staff of 10; financial planning, incl. preparation of budgets, fundraising & work w/ board of directors. Send letter of app., resume, statement of salary requirements & 3 references to: Search Comm., Hallwalls, 700 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

VIDEO ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE: Oct. '87-Sept. '88. Responsibilities incl. teaching video to young adults & working on special projects. Familiarity w/ combining video & computer functions important. Residency requires 40% time to museum-related projects & 60% devoted to artist's own work. Also asst. curator position available to assist in all aspects of exhibition planning, research & implementation & catalog prod; maintain curatorial files, handle daily requests & correspondence. Send cover letter & resumé to: Philip Verre, chief curator, Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10456.

WANTED: Bookkeeper, 2 days/month, for small nonprofit film company. Knowledge of IBM PC required. Contact: Kathy Kline, 617 West End Ave., New York, NY 10024; (212) 724-9302.

Publications • Software

CHICAGO AREA FILM & VIDEO DIRECTORY is now in prod. Listing of independent film & video makers will incl. guide to previously produced programs. Directory will be distr. at Chicago Area Film & Video Network Conf. held at Columbia College, June 5-7, in Chicago. Contact: CAFVN, Box 10657, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 661-1828.

Resources • Funds

WESTERN STATES REGIONAL MEDIA FELLOWSHIP: Project grants in amounts from $1-5,000 will be awarded to western states' film & video artists for prod. expenses of proposed new works or works in progress. The Washington States Arts Commission will award an additional $5,000 to the highest-ranked grant recipient residing in Washington. Contact: Patti Bruck, program coordinator, Rocky Mountain Film Center, Box 316, Univ. of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309-0316; (303) 492-1531 or 492-2948.

NEW YORK FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS: $6,000 fellowships for individual NYS artists. '88 grant app. deadlines: playwriting & screenwriting, Aug. 31; film & photography, Sept. 8; video & performance art/emerging forms, Sept. 28. Contact: Artists Fellowship Program, NYFA, 5 Beekman St., Ste. 600, New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-3900.

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Trims & Glitches

KUDOS to AIVF member winners of Southeast Film & Video Fellowships: Julie Dash, Mark Mori, Ross Spears, Nancy Tasecko, Tom Davenport, Elizabeth Barret, Lucy Massie Phenix, Andrew Garrison, Eric Mofford, & Herb E. Smith.

CONGRATULATIONS to Robert Walker, who has been awarded an Equipment Access Grant from the South Carolina Arts Commission.

KUDOS to recipients of National Endowment for the Humanities general programs grants: Samuel H. McElfresh, American Federation of Arts for "Art & Artisans: Ethnographic Art Documentaries from the Margaret Mead Film Festival" traveling exhibition; Orinne Takagi, Film News Now Foundation for "The Two Koreas;" Gene Searchinger, Language Project for four films on language; Robert Geller, Learning in Focus, "Rites of Passage: American Short Stories;" Mordecai H. Bauman, "The Stations of Bach;" Susan Fanshel, "A Weave of Time: The Story of a Navajo Family 1938-1986;" Mary E. Lance, "The Diego Rivera Film Project;" Diane Garey, Niagara University, "The History of the American Nurse Film Project."

KUDOS to winners of the Baltimore Film Forum Filmmakers Competition: Jane Aaron, Sheila Sofian, John Hess, Debra Epstein, Tia J.T. Lemke, Joe Chappelle, Nan Helm, David Sutherland, Lucy Masie Phenix, Theresa Tollini, Robert Richter/Catherine Warnow, Nancy Kelly, Anita Thacher, Roberta Cantow, Jem Cohen, & Susan Rosenberg

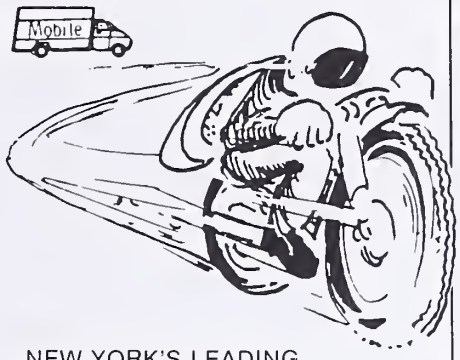
KUDOS to Joan Jonas, winner of the 3rd annual $10,000 Polaroid Video Art Award for her video performance *Volcano Saga*.

CONGRATULATIONS to Louis Massiah, winner of the Micheaux Award for Best Documentary at the 14th Annual Black Filmmakers' Hall of Fame for his video *The Bombing of Osage Avenue*.

KUDOS to Elizabeth Perez-Luna, whose radio series *One People, Many Voices* won the Ohio State Award from the Institute for Education by Radio-Television.

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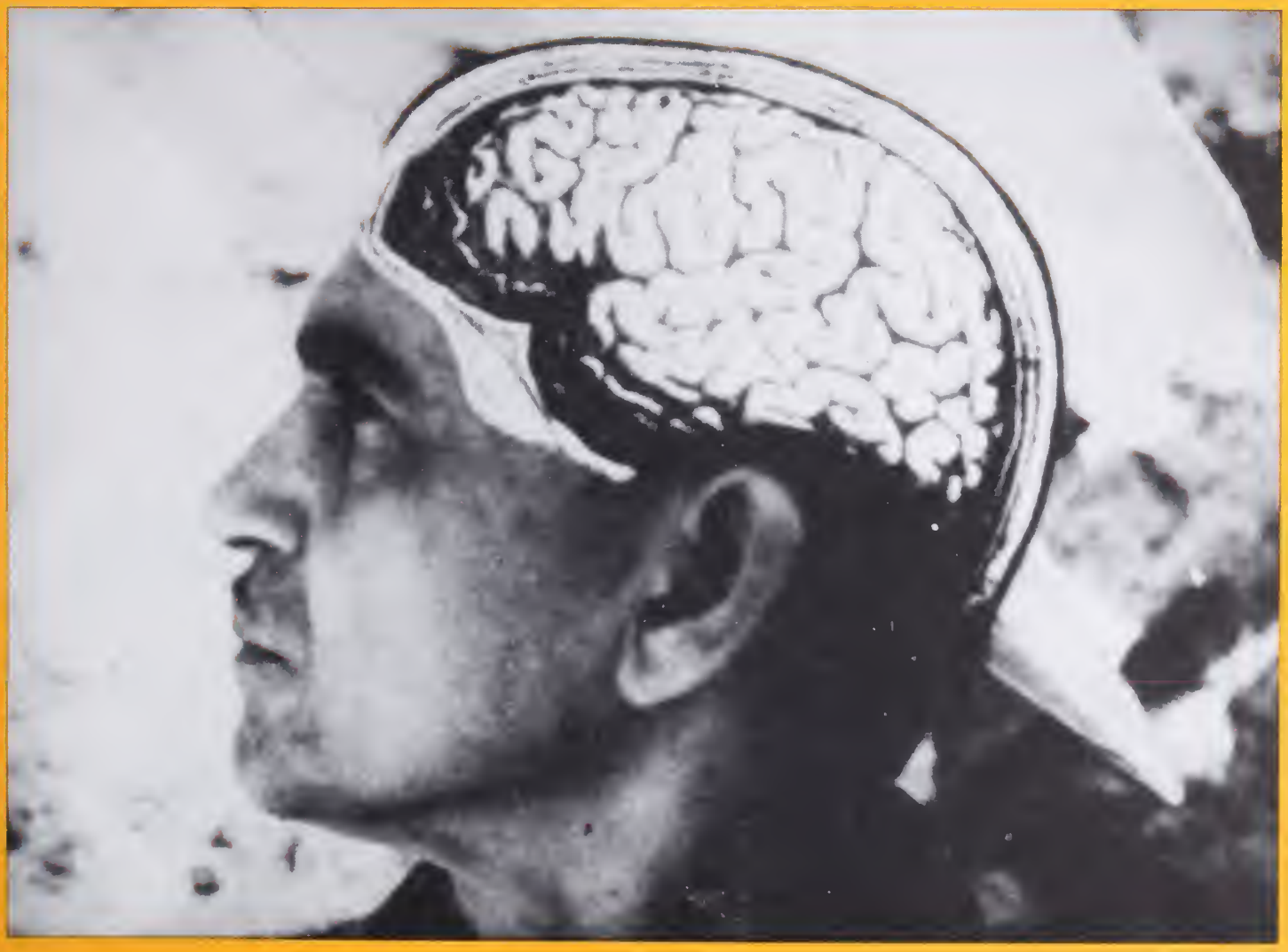
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THE INDEPENDENT



FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
THE INDEPENDENT

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COVER: *Juan sin Senso (Brainless John)*, a 1959 film on the need to question advertising rhetoric, was one of the many works produced by the Division of Community Education in Puerto Rico between 1947 and 1964, and recently resurrected from Puerto Rican archives and presented in the program, "Films with a Purpose: A Puerto Rican Experiment in Social Films." In this issue, the program's organizers provide a historical overview of this New Deal-style project, and, in "A Puerto Rican Legacy: Cinema and Social Reform," Quynh Thai considers its social and cinematic significance in Puerto Rico and for other third world countries. Photo by Papo Colo, courtesy Exit Art.

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LETTERS

SERIES BUSINESS

To the editor:

In their letter to the editor [April 1987] the producers of *When the Mountains Tremble* take exception to my remark ["Media Clips," December 1986] that I would hesitate to program a film like theirs in the first year of a documentary series on public television. They go on to say that such a series "must be pursued to include the independent community's strongest and most creative documentaries without regard to form or content." They are right of course: such a series *should* include the strongest work available.

I fear I made my point badly. It really wasn't my intention to talk about excluding films. What I was trying to say was that I would like to use the series to *expand* the definition of what is "acceptable" to the people who ultimately decide what the public will see—the staff at PBS and at each one of the system's 317 stations. And, if the first season is successful, I think it will be much easier to do that.

I should point out that this discussion is somewhat academic since, as of this writing, the money's not in place to do the series. Unless independent producers and the organizations which represent them start asking funders why this is the case, there may be no series. But I would like to assure Yates, Kinoy, and Siegel that, if there is a series, I will do everything I can to see that the strongest and most creative work is included in it.

—Marc N. Weiss
executive producer,
The American Documentary
New York, NY

FIVF TAPE LIBRARY

The FIVF Festival Bureau has established a tape library of members' current works to expedite screenings for upcoming film and video festivals. Members interested in depositing their work in the library should contact: Kathryn Bowser, Festival Bureau director, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. 1/2" and 3/4" tapes will be accepted.



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THE MONOPOLY GAME: THE MPAA AND NCTA TRADE INSULTS

As both the Motion Picture Association of America, publicly represented by Jack Valenti, and the National Cable Television Association, presided over by James Mooney, turn up the heat fueling their contest for hegemony in various entertainment markets, industry outsiders—from public broadcasters to independent producers—are receiving appeals for support from both camps. Although the MPAA has most often taken the offensive, charging the major cable multiple system owners (MSOs) with monopoly ambitions, the NCTA has countered with its white paper, "The 'Compulsory Cartel': A Survey of the Motion Picture Studios' Drive for Dominance over Program Supply and Exhibition" (issued in November 1986), followed by a supplement, "How Hollywood Is Muscling Independent Theaters, Producers, and Television Stations" (April 1987). At the April meeting of the National Association of Public Television Stations Valenti sought a united front for reregulation of the cable industry. Valenti's remarks were met with an enthusiastic reception, due to the flurry of cable channel repositioning and the elimination a number of smaller public stations from cable distribution following the recent revision of cable's must-carry rules [see "Dawning Hopes and Sunsets for Must-Carry," June 1987]. As quoted in the cable industry's trade publication *Multichannel News*, Valenti exhorted the PTV reps, "You are now beholden to a cable monopoly system as to whether or not you will be allowed to compete for a viewer's attention. As cable grows, your future is put to hazard." And *Variety* repeated his vivid analogy, "Choice is to the cable monopoly what sunlight is to vampires."

Given the statistics contained in the NCTA's white paper, however, Valenti has little reason to worry about his constituency's financial health. Like the cable industry, the major Hollywood studios have benefitted from the laissez faire treatment of the entertainment industry during the Reagan years. According to the study, the involvement in theatrical exhibition—not to mention production and distribution—attained by the nine or 10 majors in 1986 resembles the vertical integration of the industry that led to federal investigations and subsequent withdrawal of the studios from the exhibition business in 1948. As the Justice Department apparently turns a blind eye, studio ownership of movie theaters has increased dramatically while independent theaters feel the squeeze. The list of acquisitions—either outright ownership or substantial interest in theater chains—by the Hollywood giants or their parent companies mushroomed in 1986, approaching nine percent of all the screens in the U.S. by the end of the year. As a result, independent theater owners have begun to complain loudly about collusion between the studios and the theaters they control as well as between the various studio distribution entities—practices such as withholding films, limited prints, pressures to block book or blind book, and so on. The National Association of Theater Owners, which less than a year ago promised to protect their independent members from these incursions, has reversed their position, deciding instead to attempt compromises with the powerful MPAA.

The NCTA document also cites the recent pattern of increased studio ownership of independent television stations as yet another example of Hollywood's lust for control of entertainment outlets. Via this route, contends the NCTA, the industry biggies have managed to secure several of "the most powerful and successful *independent* broadcast stations in the country" and, along with them, the allegiance of their trade group, the Association of Independent Television Stations (INTV). With or without MPAA incitement, however, independent TV stations have cause to join the anti-cable campaign, as they watch cable systems gobble up some of their most profitable bread and butter—sports programming, for example.

Independent producers, too, have a stake in these developments. "The Compulsory Cartel" notes that "in 1986, over half (53%) of independent productions failed to achieve domestic release. At the same time, the eleven largest Hollywood distributors captured more than 93% of the 1986 domestic box-office revenues." In March 1987, their share reached 96 percent. And the NCTA paper concurs with *Variety* writer Lawrence Cohn's prediction: "With integrated suppliers/exhibitors in the marketplace, it will become even more difficult for the smallfry who own no theaters...to enter the marketplace." Producers hoping to bypass the Hollywood heavies by means of ancillary videocassette markets should note that the studios' video distribution companies accounted for 68 percent of all pre-recorded videocassette sales in the U.S. in 1985.

The grand prize for the victor in this power struggle is TV programming dollars. Having completed a geat deal of its planned capital construction and strung enough wires to reach over 75 percent of the homes in the U.S., the cable industry has initiated significant forays in the business of program production, presently a lucrative activity of the major studios. NCTA statistics report that the major MPAA members accounted for about half of the offerings on primetime network TV in the U.S. (not including theatrical films) during the 1986-87 season—in terms of license fees and minutes of airtime—and a similar percentage (45 percent) of the syndicated programming marketplace. Thus, the MPAA and its allies such as the INTV are challenging the cable MSO's growing concentration—and their consequently enhanced clout in program acquisition and production—before the FCC and from the podiums where Valenti holds forth on the evils of cable monopolies.

For most independents, many of the accusations of noncompetitive practices flying back and forth seem disingenuous, at best. But the industries' exchange of insults, backed by facts and figures, has exposed the expansionist goals of both groups, as well as their relative successes allowed by sympathetic government policies—deregulation for cable and increased tolerance for vertical integration in the motion picture trade.

MARTHA GEVER

CABLE COMPANY LOSES IN ERIE

Municipal governments have won an important round in their battle with cable operators over regulatory authority. In *Erie Telecommunications, Inc. vs. City of Erie*, a Pennsylvania cable operator challenged the constitutionality of franchise fees and access requirements—the first in the federal courts. In arriving at a decision favorable to the city, Judge Glenn Mencer found Erie Telecommunication's (ETI) argument that these regulations violated its rights of free speech and equal protection to be "unpersuasive."

The case of *ETI vs. Erie* was being closely monitored since ETI filed suit and stopped payments to the city in 1985, five years after having won a 10-year franchise. Had this case been won by the cable operator, it would have put into question the legality of countless other cable franchise agreements across the country written along similar lines. But now, by upholding the city's

right to collect a five percent franchise fee and to require financial and in-kind support for the system's 13 public, educational, and government access channels, the case could be an important precedent in future law suits.

In his 59-page opinion, Judge Mencer addressed several critical points regarding cable's definition and rights. The court agreed with the city that cable is a "natural monopoly." This is a definition the cable industry has been loathe to accept, since it establishes grounds for government regulation. *ETI vs. Erie* thus undermines the "electronic publisher" analogy advocated by the cable industry seeking the same full First Amendment protection enjoyed by newspapers. Mencer found that, unlike newspapers and unlike television and radio, the cable industry is dependent on using public property—the streets—as a conduit for dissemination. A cable company both "interferes with and derives profit from the use of the public rights-of-way." Therefore, the city not only has the right to impose rental fees, but has the fiduciary responsibility to do so. Furthermore, these fees need not be used solely for cable-related regulatory and administrative costs, as ETI contended. Because of these and other "compelling interests" supporting the city's regulations and because these regulations were not "discriminatorily motivated," the court found that ETI's right to equal protection had not been violated.

In his statements on the limits of the cable company's First Amendment rights, Mencer referred several times to *Red Lion Broadcasting vs. F.C.C.* This landmark case stressed that the different characteristics of news media warrant different First Amendment standards. In addition, *Red Lion* declared, "It is the purpose of the First Amendment to preserve an uninhibited marketplace of ideas in which truth will ultimately prevail, rather than countenance monopolization of that market, whether it be by Government itself or a private license." In response to ETI's claim that access requirements infringe upon its freedom of speech, Mencer countered that, while true to a limited degree, access requirements are justified because they "further secure the foundation upon which the first amendment is grounded— promotion of a marketplace of ideas." He also noted that ETI has ample room to exercise free speech on the 71 channels (out of 84) that it does control. Mencer emphasized the merits of community participation in cable, citing a prior ruling stating, "If cable is to become a constructive force in our national life, it must be open to all Americans. There must be relatively easy access...for those who wish to promote their ideas, state their views, or sell their goods and services.... This unfettered flow of information is central to freedom of speech and freedom of press which have been described correctly as the freedom upon which all of our other rights depend."

ETI also alleged that the Erie City Council and the Access Channel Board of Managers, whose members are appointed by city council, act as "censorship czars" of access channels. According to the court, since ETI has no editorial control over these channels, it lacks standing to challenge their operation. This must be done by an injured party with a "personal stake in the outcome of the controversy."

While the Supreme Court has not ruled on the constitutionality of access regulations, Mencer noted, Congress has plainly expressed its support. In the Cable Communications Act of 1984, Congress found that the content-neutral structure of public access fosters "a diversity of viewpoints," and access requirements "may provide a way of promoting diversity without straining the First Amendment."

PATRICIA THOMSON

KEEPING TABS ON CPB

It's been three years since the Program Fund of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting first agreed to meet regularly with representatives from the Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers. By all accounts, the two groups remain deadlocked over many issues concerning the role of independents in public broadcasting. Consequently, the coalition has emerged as less of a lobbying group and more of a watchdog—keeping tabs on trends and policy initiatives inside CPB.

On May 8 the coalition met again with the Program Fund staff in Washington, D.C. Their primary aim was to push for hard numbers on the use of independently-produced programs by public broadcasting—a move that could lay the groundwork for revitalized lobbying efforts in Congress. Such a study conducted in 1979, "Utilization of Independent Producers Among Public Television Licensees," was used in early battles waged by independents. For starters, the coalition proposed a joint research effort with the Program Fund and requested a breakdown of all production funds allocated for *Frontline* programs. However, the Program Fund claimed not to have a complete list of all *Frontline*'s programs, and would make no commitment to reconstruct such a list from scratch. The proposal for a more general research project remains on the table.

Another new item of business brought to CPB by the coalition was the question of copyright protection of independent work aired on PBS. Representatives from the West Coast, David Bolt and James Yee, voiced concerns about the absence of disclaimers or riders warning against off-air taping, leaving an open window for potential buyers to record free dubs. Last April, KQED-San Francisco aired Marlon Rigg's *Ethnic Notions*. When the film's distributor, California Newsreel, contacted the Ethnic Studies departments in over 20 northern California colleges for possible rentals and sales, virtually all had taped the program from the KQED broadcast. According to CPB's con-

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tracts officer, Joe Widoff, the Annenberg Project faced the same problem with its telecourse programs. The West Coast representatives recommended that PBS tag on a statement similar to the FBI warnings on videocassettes. Widoff agreed to explore the possibility.

Other business covered follow-up discussions to earlier coalition proposals:

1. *Open Solicitations:* The Coalition requested an increase in Open Solicitation funds for FY 1989, since the Program Fund has already declined a request for FY 1988, claiming that it was too late to allocate more monies. In response to the new request, the Program Fund told the Coalition it was *too early* to decide on funding levels for 1989. They did consent, however, to consider the request at a staff retreat in May. The Fund also agreed to publish a call for "new innovative miniseries ideas" for independent work in its next Open Solicitation call for proposals.

2. *The American Experience:* Coalition members relayed their difficulties in obtaining guideline information from WGBH for the new *American Experience* series. Deborah Lefkowitz, a Boston-area filmmaker, was told by WGBH that they would not release any information until she submitted a resumé. Chicago producer Gordon Quinn had similar problems, but finally received a copy of the guidelines—which are reprinted below.

RENEE TAJIMA

LUMIERE LIVES

The documentary may be considered an "endangered species," but it has its defenders around the world. Last year a group of French filmmakers, led by Joris Ivens, formed La Bande à Lumière, a nonprofit association to promote documentary cinema. They took their name from Louis Lumière, the inventor of cinematography and the first producer of newsreels. The 200 plus membership already counts such notables as Jean Rouch and Raymond Depardon.

La Bande à Lumière is engaged in battles strik-

THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE GUIDELINES

The American Experience will be the first ongoing public television series devoted exclusively to the history and heritage of America. A joint effort of three of the leading PBS stations—WGBH, Boston; WNET, New York; and KCET, Los Angeles—the series will premiere on PBS in the fall of 1988.

The American Experience will offer an anthology of programs exploring our national past. The series will not be organized chronologically, nor will it subscribe to one single school of historical thought or interpretation. Each program will stand on its own, independent of those that precede or follow.

While the series will be principally documentary in format, we are open to imaginative forms, and expect to include an occasional dramatic film. All programs, documentary and dramatic, will be one-hour in length.

The initial season will consist of 16 films—the majority will be original films, produced especially for the series. There will also be a limited number of acquisitions and coproductions. We will consider films in progress, films in need of completion funds, as well as completed films that have never been broadcast.

Content: The stories chosen by *The American Experience* will be stories that matter: stories that explore the values, the ideas, the conflicts, the confusions, and the triumphs of our collective past. They will possess an inherent intellectual depth and richness. While their focus may be quite concrete and specific, in each case they will illuminate larger dimensions of the historical landscape. A program focused on an individual, for example, will not merely chronicle a single life, but will use the biographical film to engage the broader dynamics and dilemmas of an era.

The series will not be frightened by controversy or ambiguity—nor awed by tales of heroism or villany. We are looking for strength, wit, charm, and energy. And we intend to produce a series that is as entertaining as it is important—as honest and accurate as it is fun.

Advisors: We will be working with a group of academic advisors drawn from universities across the country. Distinguished in their fields, eclectic in their interests, they possess a commitment and talent for reaching beyond the confines of academia to communicate with a wide audience. In addition to this standing group, we will call on particular scholars to advise filmmakers on individual programs.

Producers: The series will work almost exclusively with producers who have proven their ability to handle complex material with intellectual rigor and artistic craftsmanship in documentary film production. A strong track record with the hour format is essential as is a proven ability to bring in films on time and on budget.

We are interested in entertaining proposals for the first season any time between now and the first of December, 1987.

Clearly, overlap in ideas and stories is inevitable. While *The American Experience* will respect original scholarship and uniqueness of approach, we reserve the right to pursue general subjects with those we belive best qualified for a particular project.

Judy Crichton, Executive Producer, March, 1987

ingly similar to those of U.S. independents. They have lobbied the Centre National du Cinéma of the Ministry of Culture to save documentary films from the budget cuts in visual arts funding and are fighting television stations to maintain broadcast time for documentary work. Their strategy is manyfold. On June 6, 1986, the group launched a massive promotional campaign dubbed "D Day: The Documentary Lands." On that day, noncommercial users were offered free documentaries, with distributors, producers, and independent filmmakers donating half the rental costs and the other half matched by the Centre National du Cinéma. "D Day" was promoted with a catalogue listing 1,200 titles and resulted in over 800 screenings across France. A second National Documentary Day will be staged on December 1, 1987, the catalogue will be expanded, and a selected list will be published in English.

In March, La Bande à Lumière published an in-depth market study of the economic, social, and cultural impact of documentaries. They regularly cover the topic of documentary media in their newsletter *Documentaires*. Future projects include booths at international film markets and an international symposium set for 1988, the European Year of Cinema. For more information, contact La Bande à Lumière, 67, rue Robespierre, 93100 Montreuil-Sous-Bois, France; tel. 48-57-27-27.

RT

NEW DIRECTIONS

Melinda Ward, the Minneapolis-based producer who conceived and guided the KCTA-Minneapolis series *Alive from Off Center* through two seasons, has been hired as the director of children's and cultural programming at PBS. **John Schott**, previously producer for the series, has been promoted to fill Ward's position. **Sue Buske**, executive director of the National Coalition of Local Cable Programmers, has resigned but will act as a consultant for the organization. The Collective for Living Cinema in New York City is recruiting a new executive director, following the resignation of **Kate Flax**, the long-term chief administrator who steered the group through its recent relocation. On the opposite coast, the Independent Feature Project/West in Los Angeles has appointed **Janet Smith** as executive director. Smith has produced a documentary on storytelling in America as well as having worked as an administrator. Further south, the curator of video at the Long Beach Museum of Art, **Connie Fitzsimmons**, has exited her post. And the American Film Insitute's 1986 National Video Festival director, **Steve Ricci**, resigned this spring.

SEQUELS

In late April the Supreme Court upheld a law allowing the U.S. government to label three Canadian films on environmental and nuclear issues **"political propaganda"** ["Feds Dump on Acid Rain Flicks," April 1983]. The 1938 Foreign Agents Registration Act defines political propaganda as all materials disseminated by foreign governments that might influence public opinion on U.S. foreign policy. The five-to-three vote in *Meese vs. Keene* overturned a federal district court decision barring the Justice Department from requiring that *If You Love This Planet*, *Acid from Heaven*, and *Acid Rain: Requiem or Recovery?* be registered and labeled. Writing for the court majority, Justice John Paul Stevens asserted that "political propaganda" as defined by Congress "has no pejorative connotation." Dissenting justices said this interpretation "simply strains credulity."

Legislation codifying **the fairness doctrine** is sailing through Congress ["Congress and the FCC Decide the Fate of the Fairness Doctrine," May 1987]. In April the Senate approved the fairness doctrine's legal status in S. 742 by a vote of 59 to 31. A nearly identical bill, H.R. 1934 (named after Communctions Act of 1934), is expected to move quickly to the floor of the House following its approval in May by the House Energy and Commerce Committee. If passed, a fairness doctrine bill would still face the possibility of a presidential veto, which the Justice Department is recommending.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting's board of directors has recommended that acting president **Donald Ledwig** become the permanent CPB chief. Ledwig, vice president and treasurer of CPB since November 1984, would replace Martin Rubenstein, who resigned in November 1986. The recommendation, unanimously approved by the four CPB board members, will be submitted to an expanded CPB board for consideration during their June meeting. At that time, some of the six vacancies on CPB's 10-member board of directors may be filled, following the Senate confirmation hearings on those seats scheduled for late May.

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BASIC SURVIVAL IN SUPER 8, OR HOW TO BECOME A SUPER 8 SLEUTH

Bob Brodsky
and Toni Treadway

PROCESSING

Mediamakers who are intrigued by the usefulness of super 8 today are continually confronted with the fact that it's a consumer medium rumored to be dead in the marketplace. Acknowledging this, it may come as a surprise that super 8 (and 8mm) film and services are alive and well, if not readily accessible. And the quality of the services has actually improved over that of a year past. At that time Eastman Kodak's Rochester, New York, lab was delivering processed film with random repeating holes in the emulsion and taking up to six weeks to present these disasters. Company officials heard familiar customer complaints with repeated expressions of surprise and dismay. Then, in what has become customary corporate style, they shut down the movie lab operation in Rochester (and Fairlawn, New Jersey) and informed the personnel at the Kodak Processing Lab, Palo Alto, California, that all the little stuff (from North America) would henceforth be going through them.

Kodak Palo Alto, told to expect a trickle, received a torrent of film to process and immediately ran out of reels on which to return it. By fall, however, the log jam had been alleviated. As of March, it was possible to obtain in-one-day/out-the-next service by working directly with Customer Service director Ken Fossan or his colleague Vicki Williams. At present the lab is processing 8mm color (Kodachrome and Ektachrome 160) daily. Each roll must have prepaid processing or an accompanying PK-59 mailer and should be sent to Fossan or Williams' attention at the Kodak Processing Lab, 925 Page Mill Road, Palo Alto, CA 94304; telephone (415) 494-7555. Be sure to call them to set up the run and to specify the return shipper.

The quality of the processing at Palo Alto in recent months has been high. Excluding a few calamities for which they completely shut down to root out the problems, Kodak's processing has shown off the filmstocks in their best color, gamma, and granularity (or lack thereof), and they have neither scratched nor added dirt to the film. We have seen hundreds of rolls processed in recent months at Palo Alto, and the processing is superior in all ways to the uneven work seen from the cheaper, "same day" local processing labs.

FILMSTOCK

Film supplies are only a problem if you need more than a few rolls at one time. Individual filmmakers have to become aggressive advocates of super 8 or remain satisfied with wheeling around the city finding one roll at a time. In Boston, for instance, super 8 users have made it advantageous for certain retailers to stock film, so there is seldom a shortage. In most of the world, however, obtaining raw stock is very difficult if you need more than three rolls. Several years ago we asked Kodak to make super 8 color Kodachrome available directly to end users through their Motion Picture and Audio Visual Division. Their response was to move 16mm Kodachrome into direct purchase; super 8 is still the property of their Consumer Products division. Now, consumers are told daily by local dealers that super 8 is dead and urged to get into home video. This is not a likely option for the super 8 artist, so we are again at Kodak's ear to share the sales between the two divisions to enable direct purchase of quantities of Kodachrome by filmmakers. This seems to be a radical and difficult idea for a corporation to contemplate, since we are not only unable to get the name of the decision maker, but all our phone calls to Rochester lead us back to the local Consumer Products representative who is sympathetic but not in a position of power. Every third call, we consider launching a letter-writing campaign to Kodak's president and wonder where that would lead. In view of Kodak's inertia, we advise cultivating a friendly dealer who will keep Kodachrome 40 in good supply. If we then notify one another of our sources, we can publish a list of dealers with super 8 reserves around the world.

EQUIPMENT

Super 8 equipment is generally in short supply, but there is enough used technology out there on closet shelves to set up independent filmmakers for many more years. We base this conclusion on the continued availability of regular 8mm equipment. Two groups that we are aware of have called on their constituencies to clean out the closets. Visual Communications, the Los Angeles Asian American media organization, was extraordinarily successful in gathering donated equipment for their Filmmaker Development Program. The *contra*-watch group Witness for Peace sent out a limited call and found four cameras to supply their volunteers. If you're looking for a particular camera or projector, you will have to be vigilant, perhaps even a bit forward. Look in classified listings, post notices in video stores, ask your uncles who are camera bugs or have them try using the bulletin board at their country club. The logic of this approach is that many super 8 filmmakers have relegated their gear to the attic and turned to home video.

Jesse Chambless in Atlanta, Georgia (404) 767-5210, Super8 Sound in Cambridge, Massachusetts (617) 876-5876, and Halmar in Niagara Falls, Ontario (416) 356-6865 are all reliable (but not cheap) sources of recycled equipment who regularly ship internationally. Personnel at Super8 Sound are working with a manufacturer to create a new film viewer that is more user-friendly than the Hahnel model currently available. They also say they're attending to the persistent audio crackle in the Nizo sound cameras.

On a smaller scale there are specialty photo stores throughout the land that still have a place in the corner of their cupboard for super 8, single 8, and regular 8mm filmmakers. One such place is Gerry and John Krieger's Camera Shop of Fitchburg, Massachusetts, which moves equipment through so fast you can be there and miss it, but, occasionally, an unrecognized gem sits on the shelf for months. In Montreal Simon's Cameras and European Camera sit on stashes of equipment not always open to casual inspection but produced on request. Palaces of perpetual excitement over old Bolexes still exist.

While attending the Montreal Super 8 International Film Festival, we cruised the shops to see what is on the shelf or in the back room. This March we discovered a cache of new Elmo projectors at La Place Camera Store at very affordable prices, made more attractive by a favorable exchange rate. Four telephone calls to needy filmmakers led to four projectors sold. And they gave us a reduced price, happy to remove the dusty boxes from their inventory. When you travel, learn to be a Super 8 Sleuth. If you find some equipment that you don't need, call someone who does or call us: (617) 666-3372. We keep a running list of needy filmmakers and their needs.

The supplies of "consumables" for super 8 film production ebb and flow with the demand. Particularly annoying is the supply of auto-threading 200' and 400' reels (the equivalent of film cores for 16mm). *When you see them, buy them*, because when you are in search of a couple of dozen reels for editing your next project, the supply will have dried up. Plastic molding shops can produce only

so many so fast; they set up only once or twice a year. When the run is sold out, you have to wait.

Almost everyone associated with students, artists, and special producers who originate in super 8 is surprised that the actual use and distribution is increasing. Our own experience is that super 8 as film is exhibited more frequently, that super 8 as video is included by museum and gallery curators more often than ever before, that television no longer balks at using super 8 works and 8mm-originated images for news programs—individual programs or in series—and that, *finally*, there has been a noticeable decline in prejudice in the United States towards super 8 filmmaking. Thanks to the enlightened impresarios, programmers, executive producers, and users, and the hundreds of artists and technical resource people who keep working to deliver all that this medium is capable of doing.

Bob Brodsky and Toni Treadway are the authors of Super 8 in the Video Age.

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A PUERTO RICAN LEGACY

CINEMA AND SOCIAL REFORM



Quynh Thai

Imagine Jean Jacques Rousseau canvassing the French provinces toting spare copies of *The Social Contract* on one side of his horse and a 16mm film projector on the other side. At each stop, he urges villagers to read along through passages pointing out the inherent goodness of human nature. Then he beckons their attention to films depicting the fruitful processes that would result if they entered into social contract with fellow citizens. Implausible? Perhaps for the eighteenth century French *philosophe*, but not for the many Puerto Rican filmmakers, artists, social workers, and writers who in the twentieth century successfully reached their audiences in this manner. In the late forties, through the Division of Community Education, these activists committed a Rousseauesque coup among Puerto Rico's rural population, bringing to these communities information on hygiene, housing, public works, and introducing them to democratic ideas of empowerment through social participation.

What could be a better medium than film to transport Puerto Rican villagers from their immediate conditions and show them that activism could improve their communities and strengthen their position in Puerto Rico's modernization process? Film, functioning as a source of information and an influence on ideas, could objectify the villagers' shared circumstances, provoke introspection and action. Film, too, could depict the potential for these villagers to act as citizens who initiate the building of bridges, dams, or schools if necessary—as people who have a right to question ideas or investigate products, say, rather than remain complacent towards developments targeted *at* them. Film could show these villagers such possibilities.

Between April 23 and May 3, the films produced by the Division of Community Education reemerged after over 20 years of dormancy, this time in New York City in "Films with a Purpose: A Puerto Rican Experiment in Social Films," initiated and organized by Inés Mongil Echandi and Luis Rosario Albert and the project's consultant, film historian Jay Leyda, sponsored by the nonprofit arts organization Exit Art. The program resurrected the films not only as documentations of an era long past, but also as significant cinema relevant to today's artistic and socio-political situations.

In the two years spent gathering the scattered films from the storage vaults of various labs, Mongil, Rosario, and Leyda conceived the program as a means to expose the period of social history of Puerto Rico represented in the films and reconstruct the process through which the films were created. "Films with a Purpose" sought to reflect this process in a contemporary context by combining screenings with discussions led by the filmmakers, the original organizer of the community programs, and the team that put together the 1987 program. Filmmakers such as Benji Doniger, Luis Maisonet, and Jack Delano explained their production methods and circumstances; cinema specialists as well as Puerto Rican studies scholars offered other perspectives, adding information and insights about the meaning of the films.

This ambitious project provokes many speculations. Can we appreciate these films only when they are confined to the context of Puerto Rico's "Quiet Revolution"? Can this visual social activism ever be repeated? The answers to the last two questions are yes and yes. Taken not as instruments of a social program, the films produced by the Division of Community Education embody a cinematic tradition that represents not only Puerto Rico, but other third world communities as well. Today, the films are likewise valuable for their artistic experimentation. Take, for example, *Juan sin Seso* (*Brainless Juan*), directed by Luis Maisonet. The subject matter—the potential dangers of commercial and political propaganda and the need to question propaganda—is intriguing, but the presentation of this subject is also filmically innovative. Instead of relying on a straightforward narrative, the filmmaker utilizes repetition and rapid cuts to emphasize the process of industrial alienation, and he animates and dramatizes characters humorously and critically to reveal their folly as slaves to consumer advertising.

Especially significant, however, is the historical tradition that these films provide for young Puerto Rican filmmakers. For the first time, they will have a collection of films from which to derive their cultural aesthetics; they will have a national reference point for their works. Inés Mongil, who is currently working with her husband Luis Rosario on a National Film Archives for Puerto Rico, stated that the purpose of presenting the films publicly was to "situate the Puerto Rican cinematic experience within the worldwide cinematic tradition. This work represents Puerto Rico's national film history," she explained. "With it, people can no longer claim that the Puerto Rican film tradition began in the seventies."

The Division of Community Education films also reinforce an undeniable character of third world filmmaking still dominant today: filmmaking meant to further social and national consciousness. Like many who followed, the Puerto Rican filmmakers of the forties, fifties, and sixties spoke from their communities and for their people. Whether due to our disenfranchised positions or our preferences, third world people today continue to place the issues and needs of our communities before art for art's sake. The Puerto Rican films serve as models for many of the third world countries that are still struggling to ease the social and political transition that accompanies modernization. According to Mongil, the popular Cuban agitprop campaigns seem to have emulated the earlier Puerto Rican experiment.

Whether or not these films furthered romantic Rousseauesque notions of civic participation remains uncertain. The changed attitudes and ideas are difficult to measure. What is evident, though, is the significant social project they represent and the cinematic and artistic traditions that they have established for Puerto Ricans and third world filmmakers alike.

Quynh Thai is a freelance writer working with Film News Now Foundation to promote participation of third world people in the media.

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FILMS WITH A PURPOSE

A PUERTO RICAN EXPERIMENT IN SOCIAL FILMS



A Division of Community Education crew on the set for *Los Peloteros* (*The Baseball Team*, 1951): sound, Hector Moll; directing, Jack Delano; camera, Benji Doniger; with clapboard, Edwin Rosskam.

Courtesy authors

Inés Mongil Echandi
and Luis Rosario Albert

Ed's note: An earlier version of this essay was published by Exit Art in the catalogue for Films with a Purpose: A Puerto Rican Experiment in Social Films, *edited by Jeanette Ingberman. We are grateful to Exit Art and the authors for permission to reprint the revised essay.*

for Jay Leyda

At a time when Latin American and other third world national cinemas are finally receiving their long overdue recognition, we have understood the need to develop a plan for the methodological study of the Puerto Rican cinematic tradition. Our analysis concentrates on the collection of over 100 odd films produced by the Division of Community Education during the 1940s through the 1960s under the sponsorship of Governer Luis Muñoz Marín. These films represent a national artistic expression whose great value was internationally recognized at the time but which after 40 years, lacked an analysis based on modern historical studies of film.

This essay results from an extensive research project about Puerto Rican cinema, inspired by the enthusiastic participation of Jay Leyda, professor of film history at New York University, and supported by Exit Art, a nonprofit arts organization in New York City. This essay provides a general overview of Puerto Rican cinematic tradition, films as a visual presentation of the historical process of a developing nation. The essay is meant to situate the Puerto Rican cinema within the context of worldwide practices and to serve as a contribution to the historical studies of third world national cinemas.

These films constitute a unique collection. They were produced as part of an innovative approach by the Puerto Rican government to organize and educate the adult population of Puerto Rico. The creation of the Division of Community Education meant the consolidation of ideas shared by a group of creative and political figures among whom were: Governor Muñoz Marín and his wife Inés Mendoza, Jack and Irene Delano, Edwin Rosskam, René Marqués, Fred Wale, and Carmen Isales.

The program of the Division of Community Education combined the production of educational materials—books, posters, and motion pictures—with a program of field work and community organization carried out mostly in the rural areas of the island. The combination was to become a force in the lives of the people, something to stand on and to act by. The program had as its base the "idealistic" purpose of changing peoples' attitudes by group discussions and community action. Their goal was summarized in the preamble of the Act which created the Division of Community Education in 1949 under Puerto Rico's Department of Education. It was written by Muñoz Marín in English and Spanish to ensure that his intentions were well understood:

> The goal of community education is to impart basic teaching on the nature of man, his history, his life, his way of working and of self-governing in the world and in Puerto Rico. Such teachings addressed to adult citizens meeting in groups in the barrios, settlements and urban districts, will be imparted through moving pictures, radio, books, pamphlets and posters, phonographic records, lectures and group discussions. The object is to provide the good hand of popular culture with the tool of basic education. In practice this will mean giving the communities and the Puerto Rican community in general the wish, the



Irene Delano conducts drawing exercises with trainees in the graphics section of the Division of Community Education's film unit.
Courtesy authors

tendency and the way of making use of their own aptitudes for the solution of many of their own problems.

The project of stimulating self-help in the communities relied on Muñoz Marin's ideas that the community should not be "civically unemployed" and that the government was not solely responsible for the social well-being of Puerto Rico. The Division was his favorite project since it reflected his ideas of education. It cultivated democratic participation by the community in the solution of their problems thereby building an infrastructure that raised rural levels of living, maximized the scarce fiscal resources for local public works, and enabled industrialization. In this sense, the Community Education program was a part of a larger project of industrialization developed by Muñoz Marin attracting United States capital to the island under the program "Operation Bootstrap." As well, the program inscribed within the parallel "Operation Serenity" the concept of a satisfactory way of life and culture for Puerto Ricans. The dramatic and widespread achievements of "Operation Bootstrap" have tended to overshadow the great accomplishments of the Division of Community Education as a program which represented Muñoz Marin's concern with the noneconomic aspects of Puerto Rico's rapid economic and social transformations. The favoritism of Muñoz Marin towards this project is revealed in the fact that many of the films produced were premiered at the governor's mansion.

The entire Community Education program was constructed as a complex educational machine consisting of four interrelated parts: Administration, Field and Training, Production, and Analysis. The Production Section was divided into three units—Editorial, Graphics, and Cinema—which produced three different educational and audio-visual materials: booklets, posters, and films. The production of educational materials began in 1946 with the Division of Visual Education of the Public Recreation and Parks Commission. The Graphics Unit was headed by Irene Delano who introduced silk-screen printing techniques to the island. Jack Delano became the director of the Cinema Unit, while Edwin Rosskam occupied the position of editor and chief of the Production Section. One of the major tasks of this first team was to begin a campaign of recruiting the best Puerto Rican talent who showed interest in learning and developing the crafts of writing, graphics, and filmmaking.

The films are inscribed within a government-sponsored production model of documentary films that underline the educational purposes with a creative use of cinema. The first films done in the Division of Visual Education, written by Rosskam, a former editor for the New Deal program at the Farm Security Administration, and directed by Jack Delano, a photographer for the FSA's Photographic Unit, constitute an experimental phase within the production of educational materials.

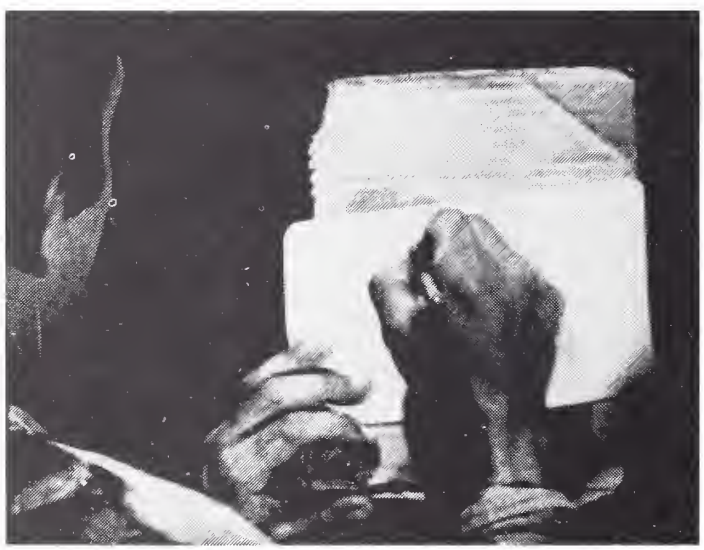
The experience of the Division of Visual Education proved that the production of educational materials within the island's limited budget was possible. This established the model for the production of the films of the Division of Community Education. Films that were meant to challenge and change the attitudes of a traditional, rural, adult population required a specific style and mode of production.

The first four films produced by the Division of Visual Education between 1946-49 (*Jesus T. Pinero, La Cana, Informe al Pueblo, La Voz del Pueblo*) combine the use of factual footage with a voiceover narration that reaffirms the information provided by the image. The simple language of the first productions was based on statistical reports made at that time, that the average educational level of the adult rural population did not go over the fourth grade. *Una Gota de Agua* (*A Drop of Water*, 1947) marked the beginning of a production model later developed by the Division of Community Education. The use of factual footage and voiceover narration is accompanied by the convincing testimony of a "real" nurse urging the people to boil water, adding the use of natural actors.

By the early fifties, the production, educational, and aesthetic model of the Division was clearly defined. Aside from using nonprofessional actors (members of communities) to play their life-stories on films, the films were shot on location in the Puerto Rican countryside. Entire crews spent months living with the people who were the actors, creating a relationship between them and the film producers that resulted in a greater realism.

The films addressed two different aspects of education: information on specific community problems and events and messages to provoke the change of prejudicial or negative attitudes. With this aim, the use of drama was included as a way of appealing to popular emotion in order to provoke the desired change of attitudes. The films represented the problems of the adult rural society in a dramatic and realistic style and were based on true stories of the communities as they were reported by the group organizer.

Some of the most common problems presented by the films as subject matter were: concrete community problems such as building bridges, roads, schools (*Los Peloteros*, 1951; *Una Voz en la Montana*, 1952; *El Puente*, 1954); consumer and market education (*Una Gota de Agua*, 1947; *Pedacito de Tierra*, 1952; *Juan sin Seso*, 1959); old leadership (*El Cacique*, 1957); timidity (*Ignacio*, 1956); women's rights (*Modesta*, 1956; *Que Opino la Mujer*, 1957; *Gena la de Blas*, 1964); cooperative action (*El de los Cuatro Cabos Blancos*, 1955; *Caminos del cooperativismo*, 1961; *El Yugo*, 1959;



Structured as flashbacks, Amilcar Tirado's 1952 film *Una Voz en la Montana (A Voice in the Mountains)* recalls the process by which neighbors of the Barrio Carruzos established a school for workers.
Photo: Papo Colo, courtesy Exit Art

Comedian Diplo (left) starred in *Los Peloteros (The Baseball Team)*, one of the few features produced by the Division of Community Education, about a group of boys and their difficulties in raising money to buy baseball uniforms.

Photo: Papo Colo, courtesy Exit Art



Accion Comunal, 1959); labor and social well-being (*Las Manos del Hombre*, 1952; *La Cana*, 1947; *El Hombre Esperado*, 1964; *Informe al Pueblo #1*, 1948); and popular culture (*Nenen de la Ruta Mora*, 1955; *La Plena*, 1957; *El Resplandor*, 1962).

One of the most important features of these films was that it they included the villagers and farmers who formed the majority of the Puerto Rican population. The films represented aspects of Puerto Rican *jibaro* (country person) everyday life, within their own context of labor and social relations. In general, the representation of the *jibaro* is not exploitative or paternalistic. In this sense, the films break away from the "pastoral nostalgia" and the misrepresentation of the *jibaro* found in bourgeois Puerto Rican literature. Instead, the films represent the *jibaros'* recognition of themselves and the solutions of their problems as a group. However, not all of the problems facing the Puerto Rican rural population found a democratic solution. The films tend to portray an idealized vision of rural life in Puerto Rico that responds to the program's main purpose of promoting community meetings and, thus, changing attitudes. Different from other occidental "official" film productions that pose a problem and a solution, these films are concerned mainly with the representation of the process of the community's recognition of its own problems.

All across the island the Division's group organizers arranged community meetings to bring the message of democratic participation contained in the films and books, often going over difficult terrain in jeeps equipped with portable electric generators, a film projector and screen. On the day of the screening, the group organizer had already visited the community to distribute the books and to place the posters that promoted the film screenings and called the people to the site of the screening by playing music on the loudspeakers. The music attracted entire families who walked down the mountains bringing with them musical instruments to play along during the "festive" occasion. The films, based on everyday life of the rural people, created within the audience a sense of identification and stimulated discussion with the group organizers of their problems in relation to those portrayed in the films.

Two weeks after the screening of the films, the group organizer met with the communities to discuss the way in which the films provided valuable information for solving their common problems. The group organizer was responsible for reporting back to the central office on the nature of the audience's reaction and the establishment of a relationship between the communities. These responses determined the content and themes of future films.

With these films, the rural communities became the spectators of their own situation, seeing themselves and the solution to their problems represented on the screen. This became a fundamental part in the development of the Division's production model. Stimulated by the films toward the solution of their own problems and improving their lives, they began constructing public works that resulted in government savings of millions of dollars annually, at the same time contributing to the democratic development of the society as a whole.

After the first few years of production the films began to receive artistic recognition in the international film community. Amilcar Tirado's film *Una Voz en la Montana (A Voice in the Mountain)* won a Diploma of Merit in the 1952 Edinburgh Film Festival. *Modesta*, directed by Benji Doniger with the Puerto Rican cinematographer Luis Maisonet, won the First Prize in the 1956 Venice Film Festival and participated in the 1957 Melbourne Film Festival.

***Modesta*, the story of a country woman's militant response to her husband's abuse, was directed in 1956 by Benji Doniger.**

Photo: Papo Colo, courtesy Exit Art

As part of their professional training, the members of the Cinema and Editorial Units began to participate in the Robert Flaherty Seminars, a documentary film organization on the East Coast founded by Frances Flaherty, which included well-known film critics and filmmakers such as Erik Barnouw and Willard Van Dyke. The films were enthusiastically received and praised for their simplicity of cinematic narrative and dramatic documentary style which used natural actors. In 1955, through these seminars, Willard Van Dyke was invited to the island to train a new group of film technicians. His work in Puerto Rico resulted in the production of *El de los Cuatro Cabos Blancos (The One with the Four White Hooves)* and a short film about flowers, *Mayo Florido (Flowering May)*.

The program continued to attract international interest. In the 1950s the Museum of Modern Art presented an evening of Puerto Rican films. The RCA International Division published a bilingual booklet in recognition of the accomplishments of the Division of Community Education and as sales promotional literature for its own products. Furthermore, RCA made its own 30-minute color film: *The School House on the Screen*. The United States Information Agency and UNESCO began to distribute the films worldwide and they were shown in Italy and Latin America as an example of educational materials used by community action programs to stimulate adult education.

In retrospect, the Division of Community Education's cinematic production forms part of the great wave of the realist aesthetic and "agit-prop" experience. In England, John Grierson, with the sponsorship of the colonial Empire Marketing Board, began to produce labor-oriented informative





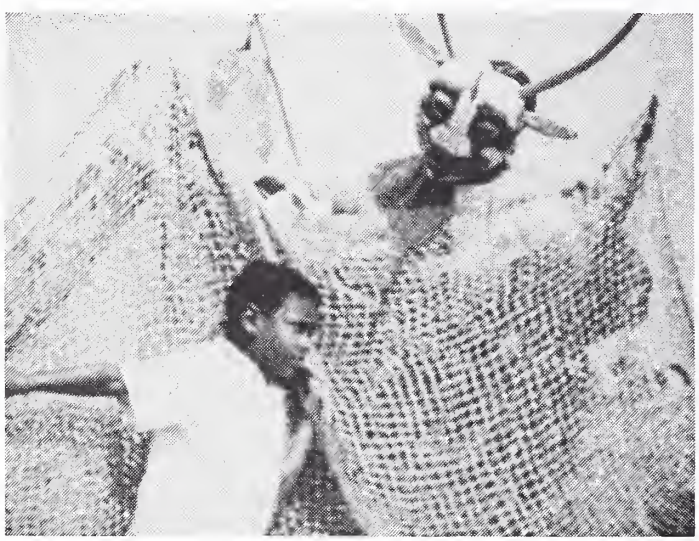
***El Santero (The Saintmaker)* is Amilcar Tirado's lyrical profile of an old wood carver who lives in isolation, but must confront the contemporary spectre of competition from mass-produced plaster replicas.**

Photo: Popo Colo, courtesy Exit Art

documentaries with the social and commercial protection of the state. Already in the late twenties Grierson posed the documentary filmmaker's aesthetic and social mission to "bring the citizen's eye in from the ends of the earth to the story, his story of what was happening under his nose.... The drama of the doorsteps" (quoted in Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A History of the Non-Fiction Film,* New York, Oxford University Press, 1974).

Under different historical conditions, this aesthetic wave is evident several years later in American documentary art of the thirties, in the work of WPA arts projects, the Photographic Unit of the FSA, Frontier Films, and especially in Pare Lorentz's New Deal films *The Plow that Broke the Plains* (1936) and *The River* (1937). Pare Lorentz' case relates to the Puerto Rican documentary tradition because his sponsor was Rexford G. Tugwell, a member of President Franklin Roosevelt's brain trust and the last U.S.-appointed governor of Puerto Rico in 1941. Tugwell became the sponsor of an office of information which visually recorded the life of rural Puerto Rico. The office of information later produced John Ferno's film *Puerto Rico* (1947), one of the first documentaries made about the island by a member of the New York documentary film movement.

That the first group of people who worked in the production of educational materials in Puerto Rico was composed mainly of American artists and social workers tied to the New Deal programs constitutes an important aesthetic and ideological influence on the Puerto Rican documentary film tradition. On the other hand, the impact of the Italian Neo-Realist Cinema served to reaffirm the artistic possibilities of educational films in terms of using nonprofessional actors and location shooting within a dramatic style in the films of the Division of Community Education.



In *Nenen de la Ruta Mora (Nenen of the Moorish Route)* writer/director Oscar Torres combined documentary footage of the folkloric Santiago Apostol celebration with the fantastic story of a young boy who becomes friends with "Vegigante," one of the characters of the celebration.

Photo: Popo Colo, courtesy Exit Art

An analysis of the general results of the work of the Division of Community Education is certainly out of the scope of our essay. However, the material goal of sharing responsibility for the construction of local public works between the government and the community promoted the development of an infrastructure in the countryside that constituted part of the political justification of the program. Therefore, the impressive number of local public works accomplished should not be the only measure applied to the spiritual goal of achieving a change in the people's attitude toward democratic participation.

The achievement of this goal of democratic consciousness is even harder to determine considering that the program of the Division of Community Education took place together with other government programs which were often contradictory. For instance, the massive migration movement of Puerto Ricans necessarily obstructed the Community Education effort. Also, while the Division of Community Education promoted women's rights, the government was launching a massive birth control campaign which resulted in the sterilization of a third of the female population of childbearing age.

Nevertheless, one of the most important contributions of the Division is in its cultural products. Millions of booklets were distributed and discussed in community gatherings. The films had a wide exposure between the 1940s and the 1960s with an audience of over 2,000,000 viewers. The production section of this government division became a workshop which gathered some of the most talented Puerto Rican artists. Writers like René Marqués, Pedro Juan Soto, Emilio Diaz Valcarcal, and Jose Luis Vivas Maldonado gained experience and exposure. Graphic artists Irene Delano, Felix Bonilla, Carlos Raquel Rivera, Lorenzo Homar, Rafael Tufino, Isabel Bernal, and Antonio Maldonado developed a fine graphic tradition. Filmmakers such as Jack Delano, Amilcar Tirado, Luis Maisonet, Oscar Torres, Benjamin Doniger, Marcos Betancourt, and Angel F. Rivera were responsible for the production of a unique collection of social films. For these artists, some of whom have been associated with the independence movement in Puerto Rico, the educational artistic effort of the Division of Community Education was a patriotic mission which furthered the development of Puerto Rican society.

Today, the films represent a visual memory of the political and economic transformations which took place in Puerto Rico some 40 years ago. To us, this collection shows a cinematic expression that is typically Puerto Rican, especially during the first 15 years of production. The Division of Community Education produced the most important body of films of a national cinema that exemplifies the aesthetic possibilities of the dramatic documentary style within the specific purposes of a government-sponsored adult education program.

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Dessert Hearts



Vivian (Helen Shaver) and Walter (Alex McArthur) in *Desert Hearts*, directed by Donna Dietch.

Courtesy the Samuel Goldwyn Company

Mandy Merck

Ed.'s note: This article is part of a series of papers and transcribed talks delivered at Viewpoints: A Conference on Women, Culture, and Public Media, *held at Hunter College in New York City on November 8 and 9, 1986 [see our January/February 1987, April 1987, and June 1987 issues]. This national conference was independently organized by a committee of women involved in film, video, and photography (including* The Independent *editor Martha Gever and associate editor Renee Tajima), cosponsored by Women Make Movies and Hunter College Women's Studies Department, and funded by the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York Council on the Humanities. Mandy Merck's paper was presented at the panel on "Lesbian Fictions."*

When Joe Lorenzo discovers his fiancée Silver Dale and her friend Cay Rivers sharing a bath, he declares that the foam-covered duo look "like two desserts"—a remark which wasn't lost on the London critic Suzanne Moore. In her review for the Labour monthly *New Socialist*, she observed that *Desert Hearts* precisely "wants to have its cake and eat it—because all the men are so nice and understanding, because the women are just so gorgeous to look at, any challenge lesbianism might represent is underplayed."

The association of lesbianism and "challenge" in the cinema is hardly new—indeed British reviewers often dealt with *Desert Hearts* in these terms, praising it in some quarters for not "alienating" viewers, and damning it in others for the same reason. Yet the truly challenging lesbian film has proved notoriously elusive, beckoning faintly from cinema's remote past (the much-mythologized 1931 *Girls in Uniform*) or its imagined future. Thus, a review of *Desert Hearts* in the feminist magazine *Spare Rib* argued, "[A] film which attempts a broader exploration of issues around lesbian identity and contemporary lifestyles still remains to be made."

But while we can all imagine the genuinely progressive text, I sometimes think we are oddly less in touch with the current situation, in which the lesbian romance is becoming a conventional—and highly conventionalized—narrative in the "art" cinema of Europe and North America. By "art" cinema I mean theatrical features which oppose the "international style" and subjects of Hollywood—films which have historically involved an emphasis on cultural specificity (of a nation or social group) and personal authorial "expression" (the director typically being designated as auteur). Such a definition could easily apply to certain U.S. filmmakers working outside Hollywood (for example, the John Sayles of *Lianna*, but not the John Sayles of *Piranha*), and it is intended to. Historically, such a cinema has proposed itself as the exponent of a more realist representation of sex and sexuality than that afforded by the Hays-censored Hollywood of the thirties and later, or by the various formulas mandated by today's youth market. Certainly in the U.S., from the end of the Second World War until the mass-marketing of harder-core films, European "art" movies meant "adult" movies meant "sexy" movies....

Now, as I have argued in Charlotte Brunsdon's anthology, *Films for Women* (London: BFI Books, 1986), the lesbian romance is an ideal subject for a cinema which takes its sex seriously and in some sense sells on that basis. It provides a sufficient degree of difference from dominant heterosexual conventions to be seen as "realistic," "courageous," "questioning"—all terms from British reviews of *Lianna*—but it does this by offering literally more of the same, more of the traditional cinematic use of the figure of the woman to signify sexual pleasure, sexual problems, sex itself. So it's not surprising to find lesbian characters across the history of art cinema—from Rossellini's *Open City* to various Bergman films to Chabrol's *Les Biches* to Bertolucci's *Conformist*. Of course, these characters weren't employed



Ruth (Jane Hallaren) and Lianna (Linda Griffiths) in *Lianna*, directed by John Sayles.

Courtesy United Artists Classics

until quite recently for romantic purposes, but to signify decadence or doom. They didn't even come in pairs usually, but as solitary eruptions into the heterosexual milieu.

Desert Hearts is different from its art cinema precursors in ways that would have seemed utopian, say, 10 years ago. The villainous lesbian character and the tragic lesbian romance of even a recent film like the Hungarian *Another Way* (where one lover is paralyzed by her vengeful husband and the other killed trying to escape the country) seems almost magically transformed into this comic romance with a happy ending. And certainly sections of the London press hailed it as a remarkable development, attributable in large part to the politics and determination of its director (Donna Deitch, who is characteristically seen as the "author" of the film, rather than its script-writer, Natalie Cooper, or even the novelist Jane Rule).

Yet this innovation depends upon a number of familiar cinematic elements:

1. The popular romance. Boy meets girl, boy loses girl due to parental disapproval, boy finally gets girl back. As Annette Kuhn noted in a discussion of *Desert Hearts* last autumn, this standard plot line would be highly improbable (and thus uncommercial) in a contemporary film. Make it homosexual, however, and it achieves immediate plausibility. The lesbian romance renews the genre.

2. The seduction of the woman. My use of the boy/girl formula in the previous example wasn't altogether innocent, since *Desert Hearts* is steeped in the heterosexual tradition of the active pursuit of the reluctant woman. It doesn't invoke the literal, commercially off-putting codes of butch and femme, but is does employ traditionally related dichotomies of class (cheeky casino girl pursues shy professor), geography (candid westerner courts aloof easterner), sexual history (experienced lesbian brings out previously faithful wife), and appearance (passionate brunette warms up cool blonde, who honors a long cinematic tradition by eventually letting her hair down). The brunette/blonde: active/passive dichotomy is now an established convention of the lesbian romance—it features in *Personal Best, Simone Barbes, Another Way, Entre Nous,* and *Lianna,* as well as *Desert Hearts.* (The lesbian vampire film reverses the convention, making the predator a blonde in *Daughters of Darkness* and *The Hunger*—a sort of photo-negative of the dark male Dracula.)

What's really remarkable about *Desert Hearts'* adhesion to these conventions is that they were all written into the film adaptation: in Jane Rule's novel there is no parental disapproval. Frances is happy for Cay (called Ann Childs in the novel) to find love wherever she can. The delaying device is the two principals' own guilt and pessimism. Secondly, the characters are not so rigidly skewed between activity and passivity, or between parallel symbolic dichotomies:

1. Far from the dark/blonde opposition, the two lovers look so alike people think they're related.

2. They both live in the West (Evelyn teaches at Berkeley, not Columbia).

3. They're both educated (the Cay figure has a degree, works part-time as a political cartoonist, and—like almost everyone in the novel—has a large library and an achingly conspicuous command of English literature).

Where the novel's characters do differ is in age: they're 15 years apart, not 10 as in the film, and people take them for mother and daughter. This age difference relates to the novel's themes of sterility (it's titled *Desert of the Heart,* remember) and maternity, and is discussed in frankly Oedipal terms. Silver refers to Evelyn as "the latest mother figure" and warns the Cay character: "Love, when little boys want to marry their mothers, they have a hard enough time of it, but they manage. When little girls want to marry their mothers...."

This theme (desire between mothers and daughters) is clearly far too challenging for a popular romantic film, although it might just qualify for film noir or a social problem drama about incest, so the age difference between the characters is reduced, and their status differences heightened instead. (Interestingly, cross-status desire isn't conventionally taboo in the way that cross-generational desire is.) Furthermore, I believe that it would have been much more jarring if Evelyn had left Reno with Cay's stepbrother Walter, who also pursues her in the film. The heterosexual older woman romance is hardly unprecedented in Hollywood melodrama (think of Rock Hudson and Jane Wyman in *All That Heaven Allows* and Lily Tomlin and

John Travolta in *Moment to Moment*), but by now it's probably less conventional than the lesbian romance.

In order to succeed as a popular romance, *Desert Hearts* was divested of any social or political ramifications or contexts which would restrict its generality. As Donna Deitch herself argues, "I didn't want to put it in '70s New York. It's not about lesbian custody or any particular issues, it's essentially a love story." This principle of universal applicability is conventionally seen as a mark of artistic success. Thus British reviews of *Lianna* repeatedly praised the film for dealing not just or primarily with lesbianism or coming out, but with "the problem of [establishing] an independent life," "starting over," and—my all-time favorite—"the endless mystery of life and sex." Such universality requires a distance from particularities of politics and history which makes Lianna seem exceptionally naive for a faculty wife in contemporary New Jersey. Similarly, *Desert Hearts* is set in a fantasized Wild West (where anything goes, pardner) in an idealized retro-chic fifties, without any of the fifties circumstances which could have contributed to the guilt and pessimism represented in Rule's novel.

The final cinematic convention I want to examine brings us back to the scene in the bathroom. It's axiomatic in feminist film theory that mainstream cinema tends to eroticize the female body rather (or much more than) that of the male. And that it organizes its camerawork and editing so that the spectator's point of view coincides with that of the hero, who looks with us at the erotic spectacle of the woman.

Now consider the poster image for *Desert Hearts*: on it Evelyn (the eastern professor) stands awkwardly in the foreground in her city suit looking out past the spectator, while Walter, Cay, and her girlfriend Gwen lean languidly against Cay's phallicly finned convertible and stare appraisingly at Evelyn. Like many film poster images, this shot was staged—it's neither in the film nor was it Deitch's first choice, an image of the two principals meeting for the first time on the highway. This image was set up at the behest of the marketing department of the film's distributor, the Samuel Goldwyn Company, who asked for a shot which would include more characters than just the two lovers.

In London, advertisements for the film surrounded this poster image with critical quotes like: "brilliant and steamy...extremely erotic," "Touching, erotic and fresh," "A passionate and beautifully controlled drama." Despite its fabrication, I think the poster represents a most appropriate "narrative image" for *Desert Hearts*. On the one hand, the male spectator—via Walter in the poster and Joe in the bathroom scene—is invited into an identification with lesbian desire (an interesting reversal on the psychoanalytic presumption that lesbians identify with male desire!). Deitch's own remarks about a male spectator at the Toronto Film Festival ("I think it's a compliment that he is drawn to them and their experience") seems to touch on this. So, more emphatically, does the praise of the *New Musical Express:* "The film totally accepts the existence of lesbian relationships, and manages not to alienate the male audience."

On the other hand, the female viewer is invited into the place which feminist film theory (crudely speaking) assigns to the male viewer: that of the voyeur gazing at the erotic spectacle of the woman, actively desiring her seduction and identifying with her seducer. I think that's true of other recent lesbian romances, notably *Lianna*, which includes a sequence at the lesbian bar with marked close-ups of eyes and eyeline matches in which *Lianna* learns to look erotically at other women. So much so that the next morning she can hardly take her eyes off women passing in the street.

In *Films for Women*, I asked what the consequences would be of a cinema which frees the woman's look in order to vindicate that of the spectator? What does it do to our aspirations for that challenging lesbian film—often described as one which would disturb the pact between the voyeurism in the cinema and that in the narrative? Instead of answering that question, I'll close with a note from film history, one which suggests that even the pristine reaches of the past may be implicated in this regime of looking. Take the supposed epitome of anti-patriarchal, anti-fascist, anti-homophobic "challenge"—whose production supervisor, Carl Froelich, decided to alter its title from that of the stage original, *Yesterday and Today*: "We want to get back the money we're investing. We'll call it *Girls in Uniform*—then they'll think, there'll be girls in uniform playing about and showing their legs"—and whose Rumanian distributor cabled urgently for a new print, with 20 more meters of kissing....

Mandy Merck is the editor of the British media studies journal Screen.

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The publicity still used as the poster image for *Desert Hearts*.

Courtesy the Samuel Goldwyn Company

FESPACO FOREVER



The legendary West African queen who rose up against the French colonizers is celebrated in Med Hondo's epic film *Sarraouinia*, grand prize winner at FESPACO.

Courtesy Dempsey Media

Clyde Taylor

Ed.'s note: This article first appeared in the Spring 1987 issue of Black Film Review *and is reprinted here courtesy of the editor and author.*

What Ghana is to cocoa and Kenya to ivory, the young West African nation of Burkina Faso (three and a half years since a coup transformed it from Upper Volta; median age of inhabitants around 17 years) is to African cinema. For one week every two years, the small urban center of Ouagadougou (population 400,000) lives up to its name of Capital of African Cinema, becoming an oasis for African filmmakers and friends of African cinema from dozens of countries across the continent and around the world. But this year, from February 21 to 28, FESPACO, the Festival of Pan African Cinema, seemed to take off beyond its usual biannual growth, welcoming delegations from Canada, Latin America, and a contingent of 60 Americans (compared to 15 or so in 1985).

Too rapid expansion, visible in unfinished hotel constructions, led to a neurotic crush for accommodations, breakdowns of schedules, equipment, transportation schemes, the indifferent effectiveness of translation systems freshly laid on for the benefit of English speakers. So said some observers early in the week. And collectors of contradictions might have treasured the progressive comrade who gave out prized hotel assignments like a judge in a beauty contest—first keys to the youngest, light-skinned women, then working his way down his chain of aesthetic-erotic fantasy. Was it more amazing that none of the babies tied to their mothers' backs ever cried, or that jumbo-sized men crudely pushed these smaller folk aside in the door-presses at the theaters? Inconveniences, disappointments, contradictions—but it was hard to locate a spectator who hadn't found more festival than bargained for, who was not buoyed by the general spirit of warm camaraderie.

For the official opening, nearly 60,000 chanting, rocking Burkinabe and foreign guests overflowed the new, Chinese-built soccer stadium, cheering a spectacle that included a very live and very hot Ivory Coast sound, a fusion of West African and Caribbean funk, to which celebrants breakdanced, a parade of the colors of the many nations and groups participating, a parade of animal dancers, another of traditional masked dancers, and a squad of parachutists in national colors and FESPACO flags alighting in the middle of the stadium while the scoreboard flashed slogans of liberated cinema or capsule facts of FESPACO's past. For one trembling moment, FESPACO Fever threatened to spill over into instant carnival as young people raced to dance in the middle of the field.

The rest of the week fell out like this auspicious beginning, interesting events conquering any possibility of disappointment by their unexpected abundance. Retrospectives were unreeled of the cinemas of the Cameroons, Canada, and Tunisia. For the first time, video was included in the festival. Also new was the market, where producers could show their films to potential distributors. English-speaking distributors, mostly African Americans, showed up in unexpected numbers, with new companies or distribution projects.

Again this year, some cineastes rose early and rode out to the Battle of the Rail—that is, laid some symbolic ties on a railway under construction. Again, public debates and press conferences carried on the radio dialogues where anyone with two cents could weight in with the directors of the previous night's films. The fashion show was bigger and more spectacular. A more singular event was the dedication of the monument to African filmmakers—a 30-foot sculpture-construct simulating film cans and lenses—at a major crossroad.

Most of the stills I shot didn't come out, but there are moments still-imprinted in my memory. Like actress Rosalind Cash dismounting a camel poorly coordinated by one of her several, silent Tuareg admirers. Or Ousmane Sembene playing countless taped versions of "Lili Marlene" for his cronies at a poolside table late into the night—ruminating no doubt on the film he is scheduled to shoot in March, *Camp de Thiaroye*. Or Julian Murage, improvising a Rasta breakdance on a son-come-home theme at the opening. Or the way the waiter at the hotel abruptly disappeared, only to turn up at the cinema before we did.

One of the revitalized perceptions that FESPACO affords is the value of people-centeredness, so much more obvious in surroundings where the distractions of massive industrial development and overabundance—what Guy DeBord called "the society of the spectacle"—are reduced. So it makes sense to mention some of the participants not merely as bearers of some of the interests and traditions represented. Sembene (Senegal) and Tahaar Cheriaa (Tunisia) were awarded medals for their contributions to African cinema at the President's banquet. The Ivorian group Woya sang, and Fela was present, but did not perform. The Latin American Filmmakers' Association was represented, by Salvador Alvarez, among others. Fernando Birri of Argentina and Sergio Giral, Cuba, were among the festival judges, as was Sheila Walker, anthropologist from the U.S. Madame Yande Diop, director of Presence Africaine, and also a jury member, announced support for a new prize for best adaptation of an African literary work. Also present were Madame Danielle Mitterand, as was Jack Lang, former French Minister of Culture. Charles Kenyatta, Manhattan activist, was part of a delegation from the Harlem Third World Trade Insti-

Beginning with this issue, the articles featured in the "Festivals" column of The Independent will report on recent events and no longer be coordinated with deadlines for upcoming festivals. For instance—using past scheduling criteria—Clyde Taylor's article on FESPACO would appear in the summer or fall of 1988, since the festival is held every two years. Instead, we will now publish such reports in a more timely manner. We will continue to present information on festivals with imminent deadlines in the "In Brief" section, which has been expanded to cover more festivals.

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Women of Lopou village dancing in Désiré Ecaré's feature *Faces of Women*, the source of considerable controversy in Ouagadougou.

Courtesy New Yorker Films

tute. Film historian-programmer Pearl Bowser, New York, and scholar Harold Weaver, Montreal, provided historical continuity for those African Americans newly interested in African films. The Afro-British delegation included Jon Akomfrah, June Giovanni, and Nadine Marsh-Edwards.

Med Hondo, Mauritania, was on hand to receive the grand prize for his latest feature, *Sarraouinia*, an historical epic about a West African queen who led a formidable armed resistance against French colonizers. I found the film impressive but rather slick, a banking method adrenalin pusher that treated African experience with some of the bombast of first world box office pageants. "Africans do not know their own history," Hondo started, introducing his film. "Enough!" someone shouted back from the packed house.

My heart was won by a much smaller film, *Nyamanton* (*Lessons from the Garbage*), by Cheik Cissoko Oumar of Mali. This meditation on the contradiction of public life in Bamako through the eyes of boys who collect garbage to earn enough money for benches so they can attend school had the communal, dialogic touch of African directors like Sembene, Soulemanne Cissé, Safi Faye, and Haile Gerima. It won the prize of the public, a very significant honor.

I anxiously await a chance to see *Le Choix*, a much-praised film by Idrissa Ouedraogo of Burkina Faso in which famine-stricken villagers must decide whether to await the assistance of international aid or set out on a high-risk migration to more fertile lands. Among its prizes was one for the score of master musician Francis Bébé. Yet another of the many films worth seeing (over 150 films were screened in all) was *Poet of Love*, a documentary on the Senegalese poet David Diop, made by his son David.

I recall becoming increasingly irritated at one point in the series of screenings by the invisibility of or condescension in images of African women displayed in film after film, not excluding those from North Africa. This issue was touched on by President Thomas Sankara at his press conference, in which he made an appeal to all the filmmakers and nations represented for the fuller participation of women in African cinema, noting that Burkina's Minister of Culture is a woman, Bernadette Sanou. The accumulated chauvinism of the films I saw prepared me to appreciate *Faces of Women*, by Désiré Ecaré of the Ivory Coast. This loosely woven collection of tales addressing the real lives of African women, directed by a man, did, however, run into much criticism because of a "pornographic" sequence of some 10 minutes or so, in which a couple enjoy sex in a river. Since the point of this scene is to celebrate the self-directed pleasure of African women, I thought of it as countering a certain sexual repressiveness in societies that still countenance, some of them, clitorectomies, but African opinion in Ouaga reportedly ran in opposition to the film. I wondered if you can find gender liberation without at least a mini-sexual revolution.

The week rolled on and with it a colloquium on Oral Tradition and New Media in which academics rather repetitiously surveyed the role of the griot, or storyteller, in African culture, in several films or as model for film directors. These sessions would have benefitted from more input by filmmakers.

The session dedicated to Paul Robeson was keynoted by Robert Van Lierop, Ambassador to the U.N. from Vanouatou and director (*A Luta Continua*), and further illuminated by Saundra Sharp, actress and filmmaker (*Life Is a Saxophone*) from Los Angeles. The newly established Paul Robeson Award to the most worthy film from the African diaspora went to *Handsworth Song*, a compelling, poetic documentary reflecting the Afro-British experience, by London's Black Audio Collective.

The Paul Robeson commemoration and award fulfilled the vision, mainly, of Haile Gerima, Ethiopian filmmaker and professor at Howard University. Since FESPACO '85, Gerima has fought for greater recognition of the place of non-resident Africans in African cinema. His initiatives drew keen response this year when diasporan delegates forged the skeleton of a world-wide association of filmmakers of African descent. The Federation of Pan African Cineastes (FEPACI), the dominant organization of African filmmakers, accepted favorably a petition from this transoceanic group for associate membership.

Transnational cooperation increasingly holds promise for African cinema. Coproductions steadily figure more prominently among significant films. *Sarraouinia*, for instance, is a coproduction between Mauritania and Burkina Faso. *Desabatago*, a working Everyman's story set in Ouaga by Sanon Emmanuel, is a coproduction between Burkina and Cuba. *Le Choix* is a coproduction between a private agency and the Burkina government. *Lessons from the Garbage* is a coproduction between Mali and Yugoslavia. *Yeelen*, the latest feature by Soulemanne Cissé,

not finished in time for the festival, is a coproduction of Mali and Burkina. Howard University and Burkina have coproduced a recent travel film, directed by Abiyi Ford (and last year two Burkinabe film students studied at Howard's film department). The pivotal part played by Burkina Faso in recent African film development is reflected in this record.

So as Felipe Sawadogo, secretary general of FESPACO, affirms "FESPACO Forever!" the future of the festival seems bright—but not without clouds on the horizon. Some of the strings on FESPACO's future arise from the limits on African cinema itself. Magnificent cooperation plans like CIDC, a multinational distribution cooperative, and CIPRAFILM, a cooperative for production, are failing through default on their commitments by signatory nations. For similar reasons, INAFEC, the film program at the University of Ouagadougou designed to serve several African nations, is closing for lack of follow-up support from those nations. Consciousness around African cinema is widening, as reflected by the growth of FESPACO and its fame on the continent, but so far this heightened awareness is only slowly transforming itself into improved material health of the cinema itself.

Rumors continue to circulate about possible efforts to steal FESPACO for other venues or of a competing festival scheduled at the same time. Those who plan such subversions ignore the principle: if it ain't broke, don't fix it. FESPACO in Ouagadougou is a unique, inimitable cultural manifestation. More than its isolated triumphs, what makes it remarkable is the unprecedented national commitment behind it to search for more complete humanism through cinema. Not just in Africa, in no place, I suspect, has the idea of humanly liberating cinema been given more intense, single-minded support by a national government. "No people should be hungry for their own image," said the scoreboard at the stadium. For one singular week every two years, progressive cinema holds a place in African imagination equal to soccer.

Did the tenth festival represent a fleeting pinnacle of African cinema consciousness that future generations will seek to recover, or will FESPACO Fever burn forever? It now begins to be hard to think of an Africa without FESPACO. Too many people share the feeling of President Sankara that "FESPACO gives us occasion to remember that we are not alone."

Clyde Taylor is associate editor of Black Film Review *and teaches literature and film at Tufts University.*

INDEPENDENT BOOKSHELF

Get The Money and Shoot
Jackson, $20.00
How to obtain government, corporate, and foundation grants; how to write a proposal; budgets; sample film from start to finish; other useful publications.

Independent Feature Film Production
Goodell, $8.95
Legal structures and financing, the pre-production package, the production process, post-production, distribution and marketing, samples of limited partnership agreements and budgets.

The Copyright Primer for Film and Video
Sparkman, $3.50
Practical copyright information: what is covered by copyright, registration procedure, exceptions, sample release.

Selected Issues in Media Law
Mayer, $2.50
Legal information on copyrights, option agreements, distribution contracts, glossary of legal terms.

AIVF Guide to International Film & Video Festivals
Aaronson, $15.00
Compilation of two years of festival columns published in The Independent. Info on over 300 festivals in the U.S. and abroad: awards, contacts, fees, previous participants.

Before You Shoot
Garvey, $10.00
Manual for the production side of filmmaking—from the idea stage to distribution.

The Independent Film and Videomakers Guide
Wiese, $14.95
Advice on film and video financing; investor presentations; limited partnerships; market research, distribution; list of buyers of non-theatrical films; pay TV, foreign TV and home video, contacts for music videos.

Home Video: Producing for the Home Market
Wiese, $16.95
Advice on development and distribution of original home video programs, new marketing opportunities for independent producers, and info on presentations, bugeting, and contracts.

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AFI RECOVERS FILMEX FUMBLE



Ellen McElduff and David Brisbin in a scene from *Dead End Kids: A Story of Nuclear Power*, JoAnne Akalaitis' experimental film translation of the Mabou Mines theater piece.

Photo: Carol Rosegg

John Greyson

Throughout the seventies, Filmex behaved like a world-class film festival, bringing international cinema to that self-proclaimed capital of film capitals, Los Angeles. Certainly no city in the world needs non-Hollywood input more, and the festival was a welcome annual celebration of *some* "other" voices. However, industry support was minimal at best, if not hostile, and the debts piled up. In 1983, plagued by financial crisis, the Filmex board fired flamboyant festival founder Gary Essert and hired London Film Festival director Ken Wlashchin as artistic director and the director of the Chicago International Film Festival, Suzanne McCormick, as executive director. Programming continued apace, but so did the debt. In 1985, as a last ditch effort, industry fundraiser Jerry Weintraub was appointed chair of the board, in the vain hope that he could pull the proverbial rabbit out of a hat. The rabbit never materialized, and faced with a $300,000 debt, Filmex '86 was cancelled. The belly of the motion picture beast was left without a film festival.

Of course, this is the thumbnail version. Many articles have charted the inter=institutional politics of this spectacle, including excellent pieces in the *LA Reader*, the *LA Weekly*, and ongoing coverage in *The Independent*. For now, the following facts will suffice. The American Film Institute picked up the festival torch and began looking for backers. Interface, a Massachussetts-based firm that specializes in international expositions, including COMDEX, the largest computer trade show in the world, stepped forward. According to James Hindman, AFI deputy director, Interface put up the entire budget of $200,000, as a "no-strings attached investment, because they are interested in moving into the entertainment industry." This amount, it should be pointed out, is less than a third of Filmex '85's budget.

Wlashchin was already on the AFI staff as a programmer, dividing his time between the former Filmex and the AFI's theater in Washington. AFI secured the endorsement of the Filmex board to proceed with a new festival, which meant they didn't inherit the old Filmex debt. The green light for the newly-dubbed AFI Fest was flashed in late November (it was announced publicly on January 10), giving Wlashchin scarcely three months to assemble a program.

The result was a respectable event that ran from March 11 to 28 at the Los Feliz Theater and other venues. Over 100 programs were presented in a series of theme days (down from 150 at the last Filmex). While any programming concept has its strengths and weaknesses, the idea of "Scandinavian Film Day" and "A Tribute to Arthur Cohn Day" was predictably the source of many sarcastic quips. Thankfully, the theme days didn't become complete ghettos (both "Independents" and "Women," for example, were allowed to exist outside their allotted 24 hours), and in practice, people ignored the somewhat arbitrary designations and simply attended whatever films they wanted to see, as at any other festival.

Wlashchin lived up to his reputation as a supporter of independent work and programmed a broad range of independent features and documentaries. In fact, the high profile of independent features provoked something of a backlash, with lobby conversations complaining about the predictability of yet another *American Playhouse*-type script. "Independents Day" featured a range of such efforts, from David Greene's *The Violins Came with the Americans* to Andy Anderson's *Positive ID*. The preponderance of well-meaning, well-made, squishy-polite, and ultimately rather boring independent films may be more an indicator of malaise in the field than Wlashchin's particular choices. One eagerly anticipated collaborative work, *Seven Women: Seven Sins*, proved especially disappointing. Seven European and U.S. women directors each assumed one of the seven sins as a short subject, which together were supposed to comprise a feature—the *Germany in Autumn* strategy. Due to myriad problems, only four of the sins showed up for the actual screening. These included a lackluster Bette Gordon melodrama about Greed set in a ritzy women's washroom and an irritating Maxi Cohen talking-head mélange on Anger, which naïvely conflated wildly divergent "freak-show" examples of that emotion with no mediation. Appropriately, Chantal Akerman's Laziness was one of the no shows, for no clearly discernible reason.

The "community" program at Barnsdall Art Park Gallery, made possible through a city-grant, featured a range of social issue documentaries and features, schematically geared towards black and Latino audiences. These included a double bill by Santa Cruz independents Geoffrey Dunn and Mark Schwartz: *Mi Vida: The Three Worlds of Maria Gutierrez*, about a young Mexican woman who overcomes illiteracy, and *Miss...or Myth*, critically chronicling the 62-year history of the

Miss California Pageant—and opposition to it. While this theater took on the appearance of a ghetto for "minority" programming, free admission to the screenings ensured somewhat better attendance than many events at the Los Feliz.

The documentaries at both theaters tended to reflect a bias towards the arts—profiles of poets, musicians, and high/low culture. There was little in the way of experimental documentary, with Joanne Akalaitis' *Dead End Kids: A Story of Nuclear Power* being an outstanding exception. This accomplished translation of the Mabou Mines theater work breathes new life into the concept of montage, to say nothing of its intervention in peace movment politics.

"Independents Day" commenced with two brisk panels sponsored by the Independent Feature Project West. The first featured four producers who addressed in general terms various methods for obtaining feature financing. Walter Svenson (*Reuben, Reuben*, etc.), the "veteran" on the panel, charmed the audience with a steady stream of self-effacing quips, while Amy Ness and Lynn O'Donnell, first-time producers of *Static* and *Living on Tokyo Time*, respectively, were fairly frank about their experiences. However, the audience had their collective pen poised in vain for the sort of more specific advice about where-those-bucks-really-are. The short amount of time, coupled with an inevitable protectionism about sources, ensured that the surface was only scratched–once again.

The "Directors" panel pitted David Lynch (*Blue Velvet*) and Julien Temple (*Absolute Beginners*) against trenchant moderator Jonathan Sanger, who set the tone by suggesting that their slogan might be, "Extremism in the defense of art is no vice." Lynch especially proved to be a skillful crowd pleaser, regaling the audience with tales of "putting Nair on a dead mouse (for *Eraserhead*) to see what it would look like." He was equally skillful at evading questions about his enviable no-strings, "intimate" relationship with Dino (de Laurentis). In short, the seminar was an exercise in reticence, whose real function was the networking that took place in the overcrowded lobby of the Los Feliz during and afterwards.

In fact, there was a social crisis that characterized not just the festival but the city. Unlike other festivals, where you can walk from theaters to receptions, the hospitality suite was miles away in the guest hotel—I think; I never found it. Susan Lynch, IFP West board member, commented: "The old Filmex was more social. With this festival, it's hard to find a place to network, where like-minded people can easily gather. This festival feels like a baby step, compared to what it was like before."

This baby step, done with little money and little time, nonetheless succeeded in pulling off a respectable and varied program, which is certainly a testimony to Wlashchin's skills as the sole programmer (which shouldn't ignore the important criticism, voiced by many, that programming decisions shouldn't rest in the hands of any one person). AFI Fest is certainly a far cry from AFI director Jean Firstenberg's wish, articulated in the catalogue, that it be "...the most respected and distinguished film festival in the world." As John Powers, writing in the *LA Weekly*, pointed out, it is certainly the *only* one in the world to name the host institution in the title: *AFI* Fest.



Angry skinheads give it to the camera in Maxi Cohen's *Anger*, screened at the AFI Fest.

Courtesy filmmaker

Some people have questions about how AFI's priorities may change as the AFI Fest becomes the institution it clearly aspires to. During the festival, an AFI/Interface press conference announced the launching of Cinetex, a world Film and TV Congress and Industry Exposition slated for Las Vegas in March 1988. James Hindman said, "AFI will be programming all the creative, artistic, and cultural content, while Interface will be responsible for the film and TV industry market. While many details have yet to be worked out, it will function as a forum for all the various components of the field: educators, independents, distributors, exhibitors, TV, and industry people." When asked whether this would be replicating and/or competing with sundry existing gatherings, such as the American Film Market, the American Film Festival, NAPTE, INPUT, and the IFP Market, he responded: "Right now, there is no one gathering for all aspects of the field. We want to supplement what's already there, fulfilling the Institute's mandate of a bridge function between various sectors."

AFI has hired former executive director of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers Alan Jacobs to coordinate the event. Wlashchin will program the festival aspect of Cinetex, but it has yet to be determined what relation AFI Fest will have to Cinetex, given that both are slated for the same month. Neither Wlashchin nor Hindman would elaborate on Interface's role beyond its financial backing of both, saying the details haven't gelled. Some observers are suspicious of these developments, characterizing AFI's one-two punch (first AFI Fest, now Cinetex) as a way to establish AFI's primacy in the field over all its "sister" organizations. However, no one was willing to comment publicly, preferring to reserve judgment and see what transpires. Robert Rosen, director of the UCLA Film and TV Archives (which programmed several AFI Fest events) says, "I am one of the people who believes that, given the complexity of American pluralism, there's a need for an AFI to play the role of a coordinator, a catalyst, and a leader in the various media sectors. My concern, however, is that it not establish itself as competition to its own constituencies, and that it develop its programs in response to real needs, and not opportunistically. In that regard, I'm eager to know in detail how this Cinetex is going to operate."

As we all are. In the meantime, the City of Angels has a festival once again, and a festival programmer with a substantive track record in relation to independents. He is the first to admit that he stuck his neck out "programming such a large chunk of independent work," toward which he says many, including even the alternative press, were antagonistic. Let's hope he can stick his neck out again, and improve on the weaknesses for next year's "world class fest." For there is one thing all are unanimous about: the subtitled city (as a friend calls it, referring to the ubiquitous billboards) needs a festival with subtitles.

John Greyson is a video artist whose recent titles include Moscow Does Not Believe in Queers *and* You Taste American.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement** & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

AMERICAN INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM MARKET, Oct. 6-16, New York. Organized by the Independent Feature Project, now in 9th yr, market has become a major event for domestic & foreign buyers, exhibitors, distributors, TV execs & film fest scouts seeking new US ind. features & docs. Last yr's program incl. 41 features, 47 shorts, 50 works-in-progress seeking additional funding & a number of film-related seminars. Screenings were attended by 300 reps from 155 companies in 15 countries. To enter film in market, filmmakers must belong to IFP or IFP/West ($60/yr indiv., $150/yr production co). In feature section, films must be at least 75 min., in 35mm or 16mm & completed after Oct 1986. Fee: $250 if entry & membership fees are received by Aug. 15, $300 up to Aug. 31. Video section is open to films under 75 min., video works & works-in-progress; 3/4" only. Multiple short works can count as single entry if total running time is under 30 min. Fee: $150 before Aug. 15, $200 after. The extensive catalog provides synopses & contact info & is useful guide to current film production; also lists previous market films. Held at NYC's Dept. of Cultural Affairs & WNET facilities. IFP publishes buyer's list & has buyer's liaisons at the market. Contact: Karen Arikian, program director, Independent Feature Project, 21 W. 86th St., New York, NY 10024; (212) 496-0909.

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 22-Nov. 8, Illinois. Oldest major competitive int'l fest in the country, now 23 yrs old. Films may be submitted in 12 cats: feature, animated, doc, short, TV production, video, TV commercials, student, educational, poster, radio commercial & music video, w/ numerous subcategories. Prestigious Gold & Silver Hugos are awarded to top winners, Oscar & Emmy Getz Award to best first feature, Getz World Peace Medal, gold & silver plaques awarded to winners in each subcat. Others receive certificates of merit. Fest receives extensive coverage in *Variety* & other publications. This yr's fest will feature a retro of Ken Russell's films, a tribute to Berlin filmmakers on the occasion of the city's 750th anniversary & section on Latin America cinema. Fest showcases over 120 new feature films from 40 countries, w/ hundreds in other cats. Different juries evaluate each cat.; last yr's jury incl. Soviet director Nikolai Gubenko, Belgian filmmaker Chantal Akerman, French film critic Michel Ciment, Swedish Film Institute's Bengt Forslund, Indian film critic Uma da Cunha, W. German actress Lisa Kreuzer, Columbia College film dept. head Anthony Loeb, Taormina fest director Guglielmo Biraghi, *LA Times* critic Kevin Thomas. Entry fees: $20-200. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", 3/4". Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Michael Kutza, director, Chicago Int'l Film Festival, 415 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 644-3400; telex 253655.

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF BANNED & CENSORED FILMS & VIDEOS, October, San Francisco. New fest will feature entries from throughout world which have been repressed for coverage of unpopular issues & opinions in struggles against social injustice, through expression of views that challenge the mass media & in "themes that foster cross-cultural unity & are catalysts for deeper understanding of social, political, economic & ethnic realities." Features, docs & video accepted. Sponsored by Int'l Network for Progressive Film & Video. Format: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: INPFV, Box 4862, San Francisco, CA 94101; (415) 285-8941.

NATIVE AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, December, New York. Organized by the Film & Video Center of the Museum of the American Indian, noncompetitive fest features new ind. docs on native peoples of North, Central & South America. Now in its 5th yr, accepts work in narrative, animation, experimental cats, as well as docs. Last yr's screenings featured many US & NY premieres & incl. mediamakers' symposium on Native American community production, which will be repeated this yr. Films & videos receive rental fee. Format: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". No entry fee. Deadline: Aug. 14. Contact: Elizabeth Weatherford/Millie Seubert, Film & Video Center, Museum of the American Indian, Broadway at 155th St., New York, NY 10032; (212) 283-2420.

FOREIGN

FESTIKON EDUCATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, October, Netherlands. Presents new feature, doc & animated productions in the 3 thematic areas of social & political issues, health care & human relations, agricultural & environment, under the auspices of the Netherlands Film Institute. Has a competition section for works completed the previous yr, info. section of panel discussions & special screenings, media market & youth film exhibit. Films critiqued by audience & judged by panel of film/education professionals. The Golden Squirrel award (plaque & certificate) goes to best feature & best doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", slides w/ audiotape. Entrant pays shipping fees for preview cassettes; fest pays for preselected work. No entry fee. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Bureau Festikon, Filmcentrum Foundation, Postbus 515, 1200 AM Hilversum, Netherlands; tel: 03517645.

FIGUEIRA DA FOZ INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CINEMA, Sept. 3-13, Portugal. Favors feature-length fiction & doc films w/ socially progressive themes, subjects & approaches. Program cats incl. fiction (for competition or info. sections), docs on social themes, shorts (12 min. max), children's films & special programs, which this yr is a Portuguese cinema retrospective. Films in competition must have been completed w/in 2 1/2 yrs prior to fest, at least 50 min. long & be Portuguese premiere. Program incl. debates & meetings w/ directors & publication of extensive material on critical issues of each film. Jury is composed of cinema professionals & selected from audience at fest. Numerous prizes (no cash) include Grand Prix for both fiction & doc, 4 silver prizes to a short, feature & doc, City of Figueira da Foz prize to 1st work, regional tourism prize, jury prize. No entry fee; shipping paid by entrant unless previously arranged w/ fest admin. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Jose Veiera Marques, Festival Internacional de Cinema, Figueira da Foz, Apartado 5407, 1709 Lisbon Codex, Portugal; tel: (01) 369556; telex 15208 CABFX (Attn: Fest Figueira da Foz).

FLORENCE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT CINEMA, November, Italy. Setting which has provided an exclusive Italian showcase for US ind. features for 8 yrs. Recently the noncompetitive fest expanded to incl. European ind. work as well. Founder/director Fabrizio Fiumi invented a computerized subtitling system which appears outside of the frame & does not affect print. Films must be Italian premieres. Very extensive press coverage. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. Contact: Fabrizio Fiumi, director, Florence International Festival of Independent Cinema, Via Martiri del Popolo 27, 50122 Florence, Italy; tel: (055) 245869/243651.

GENEVA INTERNATIONAL VIDEO WEEK, Nov. 16-21, Switzerland. Second yr of biennial video competition organized into 5 sections, which this yr will incl. an int'l competition w/ 40 videos, retros of work by Marcel Odenbach & Gary Hill, int'l info. selection of videos, a seminar w/ Raymond Bellour & Philippe Dubois & video installations. The Grand Prix of the City of Geneva is 10,000F, awarded on the deliberations of jury consisting of Thomas Pfister of Kunstmuseum de Berne, André Duchaine of Montreal Video Festival, art critic Wolfgang Preikschat, Georges Rey of l'Espace Lyonnais d'Art Contemporain & British Channel 4 producer Anna Ridley. Extensive catalog w/ articles & interviews on aesthetics & techniques & complete videographies of participants. Contact: André Iten, Video Dept., 2nd Semaine Internationale de Video, St-Gervais MJC, 5, rue du Temple, 1201, Geneva, Switzerland; tel: (022) 322060.

GRIERSON DOCUMENTARY SEMINAR & FESTIVAL, Nov. 8-13, Canada. Sponsored by Ontario Film Assn, seminar/fest designed to give Canadian film/videomakers opportunity to screen & discuss recent trends in doc production. Between 75-100 participants & 15-20 guest film/video artists, w/ 1 evening public screening of selected works at Royal Ontario Museum. Guest directors invited to present work for screening & discussion. While emphasis is Canadian work, int'l participants included. Travel, accommodations & small honorarium are paid to guest film/video artists. Registration fee for participants: $150 for the week, w/ breakfast & lunch; everyone expected to stay entire week. Fest pays return shipping, 1/2" preferred for preselection. Format: 16mm, 1/2". Deadline: July 31. Contact: Nora Currie, coordinator, Grierson Documentary Seminars '87, 88 Wellesley St. E., #206, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1H4, Canada; tel: (416) 964-1944.

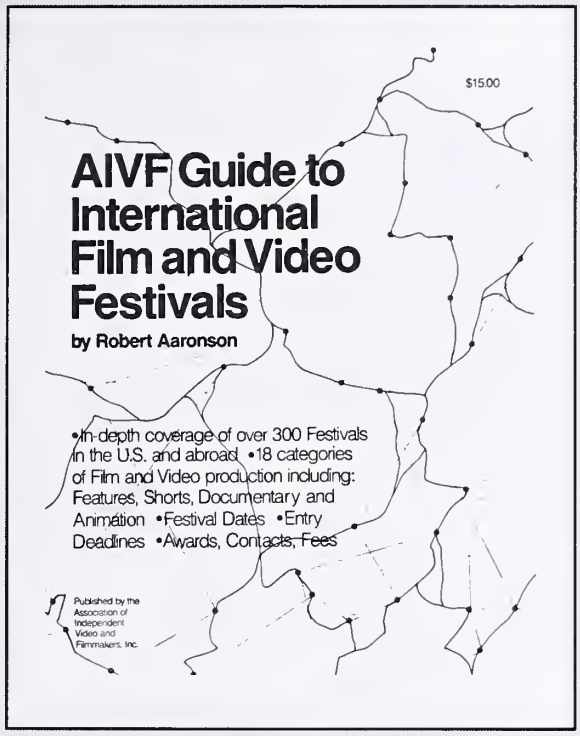
HONG KONG INDEPENDENT SHORT FILM EXHIBITION, December, Hong Kong. One of the aims of fest is to "enhance cultural exchange between local & overseas filmmakers" & US ind. shorts welcomed. Noncommercial films accepted in cats of narrative, doc, experimental & animation. Max running time: 30 min.. Certif. of participation given all entries. Format: 35mm, 16mm, super 8. Entry fee: $10. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Phoenix Cine-Club, Box 7449, Hong Kong.

IGUALADA INTERNATIONAL WEEK OF AMATEUR CINEMA, Oct. 24-31, Spain. 3rd biennial edition of competition for amateur productions in cats of argument, fantasy/cartoons & doc. Cash prizes ranging from 5,000-25,000 pts., as well as golden, silver & bronze medals awarded to super 8 & 16mm films. TV station in Catalonia also sponsors a special prize of 40,000 pts. for 1 16mm film (reserves unlimited broadcast rights for 5 yrs). Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Certamen International de Cine Amateur Ciutat d'Igualada, Film Amateur del C.N.I., Apartado de Correos 378, 08700 Igualada (Barcelona), Spain; tel: (93) 8033620, telex 52038 PBCO E.

INTERFILM, September, Germany. Focused on super 8 films, fest enters 5th yr as showcase for recent films from several countries. Last yr's lineup featured works from Japan, Argentina, Hungary, England & Sweden, as well as a Derek Jarman super 8 retro. This year's will feature works from Australia, Belgium, Turkey, Italy, Taiwan & Canada & will be organized by Robin Dickie of New York's Collective for Living Cinema. Fest has featured special sections on US ind. & experimental films & has an interest in broadening the participation of such films. No fee. Fest pays return shipping. It also selects a program of about 100 min. from the fest entries, covers costs for new prints & gives makers percentage of rental fees from program distrib. Fest provided accommodations for each attending filmmaker & in some cases may cover travel expenses. Deadline: Aug. 1 (entry forms), Aug. 10 (films or preview cassettes). Contact: Jurgen Bruning, program director, Interfilm, Kino Eiszeit, Zeughofstrasse 20, 1000 Berlin 36, W. Germany; tel: (030) 6116016.

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CARTOON ANIMATION & PUPPETRY, October, France. Films & videos entered in this competitive fest, held in Antibes-Juan-les-Pins on the French Riviera, should be over 2 min., produced in the 30 mos prior to fest & in the cats of traditional cartoon (celluloid or cut paper), "frame by frame"-made puppet or article animation, manipulated puppets, computer-assisted animation or synthetic pictures. An int'l jury awards the top Golden Mermaid prize in each cat; other awards incl. special jury prize & recognition for aesthetics, originality, technical quality of animation/manipulation, writing & music. Concurrent market, exhibits of new animation techniques & facilities for meeting production & distrib. companies provided. Entrants responsible for shipping costs; fest assumes customs clearance & expenses. 10 hours of local TV coverage provided & entrants must grant permission for a max of 3 min. of their films. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 1", 3/4", 1/2" (for amateur prods). Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: International Festival of Cartoon Animation & Puppetry, 28, rue Gioffredo, 06000 Nice, France; tel: (93) 620220; telex 461882F.

KARLOVY VARY INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF TOURIST FILMS (TOURFILM), Sept. 21-26, Czechoslovakia. Organized by tourism committees of a number of eastern



Indexed for easy reference

Festival profiles

Awards

Contacts/Fees

Audience

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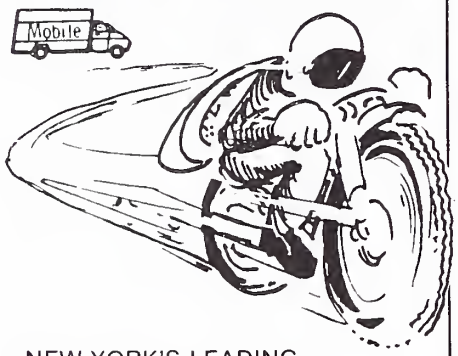
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***Langston Hughes: The Dreamkeeper,* St. Clair Bourne's film on Hughes' life, which is part of the 13-part New York Center for Visual History's "Voices and Visions" series on American poets, was one of the 50 nonfeature-length films and works-in-progress screened at the American Independent Feature Market last fall.**

Courtesy the Schomburg Center

European nations, this fest's motto is "closer acquaintance & better understanding among nations, for peaceful coexistence" & purpose is to promote tourist travel. Films & videos are presented in competitive, information & commercial sections. Prizes incl. grand prize Golden Flower & Silver & Bronze Flowers, with numerous special prizes sponsored by various orgs. Jury composed of professionals from 12 countries. The festival holds films in Czechoslovakia for a period of 6 mos. Entrant pays shipping costs. Fee: $75. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: July 15. Contact: Jiri Mikes, festival secretary, TOURFILM, Vaclavske namesti 28, 112 13 Praha 1, Czechoslovakia; tel: 268348/269874; telex 122336.

KRANJ INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ETHNOLOGICAL & ECOLOGICAL FILMS, Sept. 28-Oct. 2, Yugoslavia. Biennial fest whose aim is to "demonstrate through films the close connection between ecology & ethnology, social responsibility for the developement of the two sciences & problems pointed out by the two sciences." 5 awards given by int'l jury of 3 filmmakers & 2 professionals working on ethnology/ecology in cats of doc, science & education. Films must be under 60 min. & completed after June '85. Fest pays return shipping & films sent back w/i 60 days. Audiences of about 10,000, according to director. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Tone Frelih, director, Interfilm Festival, Zrinjskega 9, 61000 Ljubljana, Yugoslavia.

LA ROCHELLE INTERNATIONAL SAILING FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 29-Nov. 1, France. 6th biennial event showing over 100 films & videos on sailing, in cats of off-shore races, waves & wind & unusual sails; video cats are doc, sailing techniques & instruction & fiction & interactive games. Numerous prizes range from Festival Grand Prix of 20,000F to 15,000F for video. Fest pays return shipping. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Michael Masse, Festival du Film de Voile, Port des Minimes, B.P. 145, 17005 La Rochelle Cedex, France; tel: (46) 451403.

NANTES FESTIVAL OF THREE CONTINENTS, December, France. One of the leading European competitive fests for 3rd world & ind. productions & will enter 9th yr highlighting productions from Africa, Asia, Latin America & black & 3rd world filmmakers in the US. Last year's top award went to Chinese filmmaker Yan Xueshu's *Ye Shan*, with other awards going to leading actors & actresses in productions from Turkey, Argentina & Brazil; sidebars incl. homage to Nikkatsu, a Japanese erotic film production house & retro of S. Korean cinema. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 30. Contact: Alain Jalladeau, director, Nantes Festival des Trois Continents, B.P. 3306, 44003 Nantes, Cedex 01, France; tel: (40) 897414.

NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO, Oct. 30-Nov. 1, England. Sponsored by Media Centre of South Hill Park, now in 8th yr, featuring English & int'l productions. Format: 3/4", preview on 1/2", work may have originated in any format. Production funds awarded. Seeking work by women & minority videomakers. Deadline: Aug. 14. Contact: Media Centre, South Hill Park, Bracknell, Berks RG12 4PA, England; tel: Bracknell 0344 427272.

NATURE, MAN & HIS ENVIRONMENT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, November, Italy. Noncommerical fest which promotes films on natural conservation, protection of human environment & preservation of historic character of cities; presented each year in a different Italian provincial capital. 14 cats deal w/ subjects such as pollution, preservation of flora & fauna, problems of parks & reserves, public health/hygiene, ecology. Films may be live or animated. Fest is not competitive, but awards presented to orgs & individuals for significant contributions to environmental safeguarding. No fee; entrant pays shipping costs. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Contact: Liborio Rao, director, Nature, Man & His Environment International Film Festival, Via di Villa Patrizi 10, 00161 Rome, Italy; tel: (06) 841481.



In *Snow Job*, Barbara Hammer extracts—in order to expose—elements of the commercial media's hysterial coverage of the subject of AIDS.

Courtesy videomaker

Renee Tajima

It is rare that we get a view of everyday life in a third world country from the perspective of an insider. **Journal from Tehran** gives one: a 20-minute film about Tehran, Iran, produced by Iranian-born Persheng Sadegh-Vaziri. The filmmaker visited her homeland in 1985 after a seven-year absence. She surreptitiously filmed the daily life in the city and compiled her impressions in four segments, structured as journal entries. The film begins with a survey of changes in the appearance of the city since the revolution, then digs deeper—contrasting westernized and traditional elements, exploring issues of politics, religion, and the seven-year war with neighboring Iraq. In an epilogue, Sadegh-Vaziri interviews Iranians who live outside Iran. She won a 1986 New England Film/Video Fellowship, and *Journal from Tehran* was completed last December. Shot and edited on super 8, the film is being distributed on 1/2" and 3/4" video. *Journal from Tehran*: Persheng Sadegh-Vaziri, 86 Jersey St. #4, Boston, MA 02215; (617) 262-8823.

Northern Ireland is a name that conjures up a one-dimensional set of media images—burning cars, streets filled with soldiers, bombed-out buildings, and neighbors fighting neighbors. But, according to filmmakers Ron Boyd and Michael Niederman, "To be in Northern Ireland, to hear in their own voices what the people think, to be on the streets that give birth to the violence but also the hope, gives you an understanding that goes beyond the clichéd images that have become Northern Ireland to the world." Their video **Voices from Northern Ireland** takes a street level view into the hearts and minds of Catholics and Protestants in the country. Taped during the fall of 1985 in Belfast and Londonderry, the video attends to the concerns of parents and children for the future of their nation and of their lives. The project was sponsored by the Irish Children's Fund of Chicago, with postproduction funding from the Center for New Television and Columbia College Chicago. It has already been broadcast on WTTW-Chicago and sold to BOP-TV in Bophuthatswana. *Voices from Northern Ireland*: Michael Niederman, 2556 W. Fitch, Chicago, IL 60645; (312) 262-1156.

Filmmaker Lynn Mueller produced **Silver into Gold** as a graduate thesis about two Bay Area athletes and went on to win the 1987 National Media "Owl" award for best independent film/video from the Retirement Research Foundation. *Silver into Gold* portrays the "running nun" Marion Irvine and master swimmer Gail Roper, two women who defy stereotypes of older athletes. Irvine was an overweight, two-pack-a-day smoker who began running at the age of 48 and six years later became the oldest athlete ever to qualify for the Olympic trials in both track and field. Rober, a former Olympic swimmer, came back from a 20-year retirement to earn eight gold medals at the 1985 Masters Games and nine more at competitions in Tokyo. She is a grandmother and mother of seven children. Mueller wrote, produced, directed, and edited *Silver into Gold*, her first feature-length film. It also won a first prize "Golden Apple" at the 1987 National Educational Film and Video Festival and Honorable Mention at the San Francisco International Film Festival. *Silver into Gold*: Barr Films, 3490 Foothill Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107; (213) 793-6153.

Artist/filmmaker Barbara Hammer recently completed **Snow Job**, an eight-minute video collage of representations of AIDS in the popular press. Hammer, who teaches a course at Evergreen State College entitled "Performance Media in Popular Culture," confronts the media's reaction to the AIDS crisis, where distortion and misrepresentation amount to a "snow job" promoting homophobia, discrimination, and repression of gays. A formal device of repeated and variable computer-generated snow patterns and formations suggests the media cover-up Hammer finds in the mass media treatment of the subject AIDS. Hammer is distributing *Snow Job* on 1/2" and 3/4" video. *Snow Job: The Media Hysteria of AIDS*: Barbara Hammer, COM 301, Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA 98505.

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ing social opposition? Bill Jersey, David Soul, and Richard Wormser consider this question in their provocative documentary **The Fighting Ministers.** It is the story of three men who defy their communities and challenge their own congregations when they take an uncompromising stand against the economic devastation of their region. They are clergymen and members of Denominational Ministry Strategy, an ecumenical group engaged in outreach to the unemployed steelworkers left behind by the liquidation of Pittsburgh's steel industry. When the ministers decide to confront the city's business leaders with the moral implications of the decision to close plants, they face the wrath of the local power structure and the church hierarchy—and bitter divisions within their congregations. *The Fighting Ministers* won an Honorable Mention at the Global Village Annual Documentary Festival and a Special Jury Award at the San Francisco International Film Festival. *The Fighting Ministers*: California Newsreel, 630 Natoma St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 621-6196.

Filmmaker and organizer for the American Federation of Teachers, Fred Glass, has produced the first "generic" union steward training tape that crosses industrial lines. **The Case of the Grieving Waitress** presents a realistic situation of a steward in action. When foodserver Jane is suspended for five days by her supervisor for refusing to work an arbitrary extra shift, she enlists the aid of her steward Susan. The tape chronicles the meeting between Susan, Jane, and the supervisor Jerry, following the emotional dynamics and strategy for gaining a resolution. *The Case of the Grieving Waitress* was conceived when instructors at the Labor Center decided they needed to spice up their steward training courses. Glass convinced them to produce on broadcast quality equipment and spent two years of his leave from his post as staff organizer at San Mateo Community College in California to complete the tape. *The Case of the Grieveing Waitress*: Institute of Industrial Relations, Center for Labor Research and Education, 2521 Channing Way, Berkeley, CA 94720; (415) 642-0323.

Michigan producer Paul Hart continues to record and compile footage on contemporary political issues with his company News on Film. He took a crew to the April 25 mobilization in Washington, D.C., to document the rally against U.S. foreign policy in Central America and South Africa and, two days later, the arrests of protesters at Central Intelligence Agency headquarters in Virginia. The footage will be transferred to video and produced as a half-hour documentary for use by television stations and organizations. Last January, Hart presented a work-in-progress screening of his documentary **Cruise Control** on efforts by Michigan peace groups to stop production of cruise missile engines in the state. Paul Hart, News on Film, Box 6141, E. Lansing, MI 48826-6141.

CLASSIFIEDS

The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy • Rent • Sell," "Freelancers" & "Postproduction" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$15 per issue**. Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear.

Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., July 8 for the October issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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1987 NFLCP NATIONAL CONVENTION: Nat'l Federation of Local Cable Programmers' annual meeting, July 16-18, 1987, at the Chicago Hilton & Tower in Chicago, IL. This year's theme: "Community Programming: Voices of Diversity." Contact: NFLCP, 906 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20003; (202) 544-7272.

Films Tapes Wanted

MEDIA MIX is accepting original film, video & computer work for cable TV series *New Gallery*. Fictional, narrative, non-narrative, experimental & abstract work accepted. All work must be submitted on 3/4" videotape, not to exceed 23 min. total running time. Send submissions and return postage to: Dak/Media Mix Cableshow, c/o Falcon Video Studios, 271 Cleveland Ave., Highland Park, NJ 08904; (201) 247-4720.

SOUTHERN CIRCUIT: Open solicitation to film/video artists for the 1988 Southern Circuit exhibition tour of 7 southern cities organized by South Carolina Arts Commission. Submit printed materials only, incl. resumé & publicity for round one in selection process. Deadline: July 3. Contact: SCAC Media Arts Center,1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201, Attn: Susan Leonard.

NATIVE AMERICAN PUBLIC BROADCASTING CONSORTIUM seeks video & film productions made by, for, or about Native Americans as possible addition to videotape library. Send tapes to: NAPBC, Program/project director, Box 83111, Lincoln, NE 68501.

NEWS ON FILM seeks film footage of newsworthy events & people, especially current, for representation. Contact: News on Film, Box 6141, E. Lansing, MI 48826-6141; (517) 351-2603.

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POSITION AVAILABLE: Director, Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center. Oversee artistic & fiscal direction of organization; supervise & recruit professional curatorial & administrative staff of 10; financial planning, incl. preparation of budgets, fundraising & work w/ board of directors. Send letter of app., resumé, statement of salary requirements & 3 references to: Search Committee, Hallwalls, 700 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

Publications Software

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES 21st Annual Report is now available. Incl. brief descriptions of NEH programs & complete listing of all grants. Free while the supply lasts. Contact: NEH 1986 Annual Report, Rm. 409, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

INT'L ELECTRONIC ARTIST NETWORK: Through Art Com Electronic Network, a growing int'l network of artists use WELL computer conferencing & electronic mail system as an on-line community center, meeting place & electronic public gallery. Carried by the Whole Earth Lectronic Link (WELL) w/ monthly sub. fee of $8 & $3/hr on-line. For more info, contact: Art Com, (415) 431-7524 (voice) or WELL, (415) 332-4335 (voice). To access electronically, dial: (415) 332-6106 (modem) & type newuser <cr> & follow instructions.

THE FOUNDATION CENTER has announced the publication of *America's Wealthy & the Future of Foundations*, an extensive investigation of charitable giving & philanthropic foundations. $34.95 hardbound/$24.95 paper, plus $2 shipping & handling. To order by phone, call: (800) 424-9836, or write: Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10003; (212) 620-4230.

1987 NEW YORK TV DIRECTORY is now available from the New York Chapter of the Nat'l Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. $15.00 per copy. Incls. directory of members, index to advertisers, services & facilities. Contact: NATAS, 110 W. 57th St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 765-2450.

VIDEO HANDBOOK is now available from UCVideo. Written by video pros, the handbook is a step-by-step guide to portable video prod. & postprod. $8 plus $1.25 postage & handling per book. Order through UCVideo, 425 Ontario St., SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 624-4444.

Resources Funds

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Next deadline for humanities projects in the media: Sept. 18. Contact: James Dougherty, NEH, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 786-0378.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION Fellowship application deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: SCAC, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201.

NEW YORK STATE FILM EXHIBITION PROGRAM grants available from the Film Bureau. Offered to nonprofit organizations in NYS for film screenings of ind. works or films not ordinarily available to the public. Matching funds of up to $300 are available for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadlines: June 15, Aug. 15 & Jan. 15. Contact: Film Bureau, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

FULLBRIGHT SCHOLAR AWARDS in all disciplines awarded to faculty & scholars. Deadline for research in Africa, Asia, Europe & the Middle East: Sept. 15. For applications, call or write: Council for Int'l Exchange of Scholars, 11 Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1257; (202) 939-5401.

MID ATLANTIC VISUAL ARTS RESIDENCY PROGRAM: Nonprofits may apply to host residencies of 2 weeks - 3 months by professional artists, critics, curators, or staff. Grant awards incl. $2,000/mo in resident fees, $300 in photographic documentation costs & round trip travel between resident's home & host site. Host organizations must be located in DE, DC, MD, NJ, NY, PA, VA, or

WV. Residents must live within the region, but outside the host organization's state. Residencies must take place btw. Nov. 1, 1987 & Dec. 31, 1988. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, 11 E. Chase St., Suite 1A, Baltimore, MD. 21201; (301) 539-6656.

NEW YORK FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS: $6,000 fellowships for individual New York State artists. Deadlines: Aug. 31, playwriting/screenwriting; Sept. 8, film, photography; Sept. 28, video, performance art/emergent forms. Contact: Artists' Fellowship Program, NYFA, 5 Beekman St., Ste. 600, New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-3900.

LONG ISLAND ASSOC. FOR MOTION PICTURE ARTS: Grant available for a Long Island-based film production. Documentary, narrative, or experimental. 1987/88 grant: $500. Deadline: September 30. Contact: LIAMPA, Box 193, East Rockaway, NY 11518.

Trims & Glitches

CONGRATS to winners of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting Production Fellows Project for minority & women producers: Nondas Voll, Akili Ramon Tyson, Vidal Guzman & Kaye Lavine.

KUDOS TO JANET JALLER WEISS whose video spots produced for the United Nations have been screened at the MIP Cannes Video Festival for two consecutive years.

KUDOS to Jack Fahey & Catherine Russo, whose video *Enough Crying of Tears* has been selected for 1st Documentary Award by the 6th Daniel Wadsworth Memorial Video Festival.

CONGRATULATIONS TO GUGGENHEIM FELLOWS in film, video & sound art: Charles Atlas, Morgan Hall Fisher, Julie Gustafson, Robert Hillmann, Shigeko Kubota, Richard Lerman, Dianne Orr, Stevenson Palfi, David Parry, Liz Phillips, Mark Rappaport, C. Larry Roberts & Buky Schwartz.

KUDOS to winners of the Midwestern Regional Fellowship Program: Pam Falkenberg & Dan Curry, Timothy Lee Hittle, Wendy Watson, Juanita Anderson, Pamela Le Blanc, Deanna Morse, Thom Anderson, Mable Haddock, Kurt Kellison, R. Damiano Russo, Jason Tannen & Kate Gallion, Susan Wehling, Dawn Wiedemann, Jerry Blumenthal & Gordon Quinn, Mindy Faber, Judy Hoffman, Pier Marton, Thomas Palazzolo, Mirko Popadic, Edward Rankus, Susan Regele, Loretta Smith, Robert Snyder, David Streib, Colleen Sullivan & Luis Hector Valdovino.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW YORK FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS Fellowship winners in film: Jane Aaron, Robert Ascher, Ericka Beckman, Robert Breer, Roberta Cantow, Kavery Dutta, Holly Fisher, Anne Flournoy, Ernie Gehr, Sharon Greytak, Manfred Kirchheimer, Ken Kobland, Susan Kouguell, Lorraine Miller, Jacki Ochs, Mark Rappaport, Steven Siegel, Renee Tajima & Lynne Tillman; video: Cat Ashworth, David Blair, Tony Conrad, Lynn Corcoran, Annie Goldson, Shalom Gorewitz, Ernest Gusella, Alexander Hahn, Dale Hoyt, Deans Keppel, Carole Ann Klonarides/Michael Owen, Paul Lamarre, Theresa Mack, Betsy Newman, Dan Reeves, Ken Rowe, Celia Shapiro, David Shulman, Michael Smith & Debra Wanner.

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FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the Governor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

SUMMARY OF THE AIVF/FIVF BOARD MINUTES

The Board of Directors of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met on March 27, 1987. The proceedings are summarized below. For a copy of the complete minutes, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

REPORTS

Executive director Lawrence Sapadin opened the meeting with the announcement that he had reached agreement with the Benton Foundation for FIVF to administer a donor-advised grant making procedure to distribute funds to independent producers from the Benton Foundation and the Beldon Fund. Benton also provided FIVF with a grant to do outreach in an effort to get other foundations to contribute to the fund.

The membership committee recommended that AIVF push to get more media centers involved with AIVF's joint membership program. AIVF currently has successful joint membership arrangements with five media centers. The committee also recommended that AIVF institute procedures for the use of charge cards for renewals and other transactions.

The development committee recommended that AIVF conduct the Indie Awards on an alternate year basis and that the next awards program be held in 1988, perhaps in conjunction with AIVF's annual membership meeting.

The advocacy committee reported that its priorities for the next year were development of a national position on public broadcasting and an exploration of the feasibility of a New York State independent production fund for television.

OLD BUSINESS

The board reviewed the status of "The American Documentary," a proposed series of independent documentaries for PBS distribution. The Program Fund of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting refused to reconsider the amount of its grant to the series and to fund the full request, in response to a letter from AIVF. In addition, the series board, representing the consortium of sponsoring stations, refused to seat any independent producer representatives on its board of directors. AIVF will send a follow-up letter. The AIVF board reaffirmed by consensus its past practice of not involving itself in the executive director's decisions to participate in the governing boards, advisory boards, or panels of other organizations. (A discussion of the participation of the executive director on the advisory board of "The American Documentary" had been tabled from the last board meeting.)

The board discussed further the event that AIVF will host in June on the occasion of the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers Conference and the American Film/Video Festival.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board resolved to draft a letter to the National Endowment for the Arts expressing concern about the NEA's refusal to fund a project after unanimous support from the peer review panel and enthusiastic endorsement by several other experts from the field.

The Board set meeting dates for the next year. They are: June 18 and 19, 1987; September 17 and 18, 1987; December 10 and 11, 1987; March 17 and 18, 1988; and June 16 and 17, 1988.

AIVF Board meetings are public and members are encouraged to attend. For more information, call AIVF (212) 473-3400. Always confirm dates in advance.

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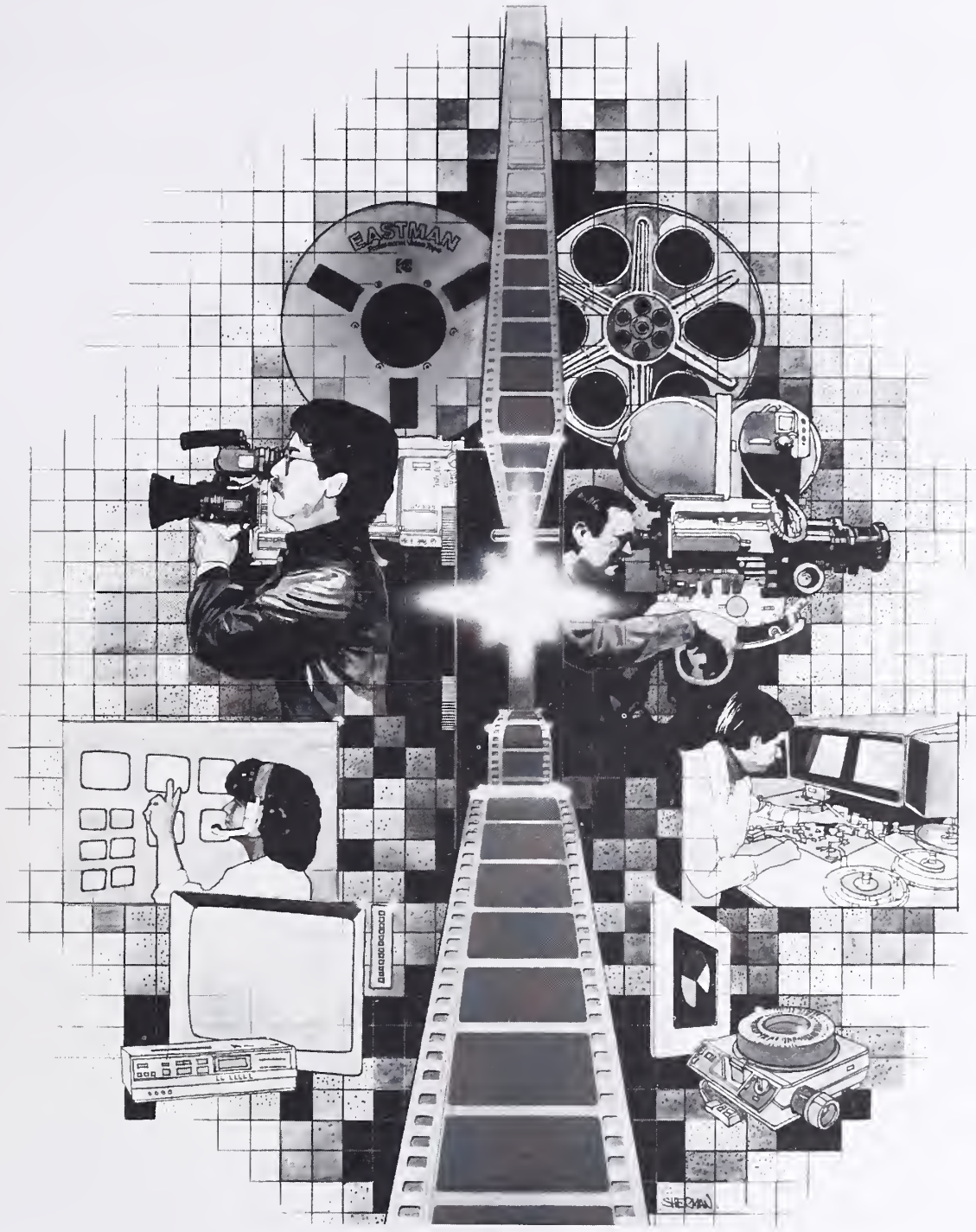
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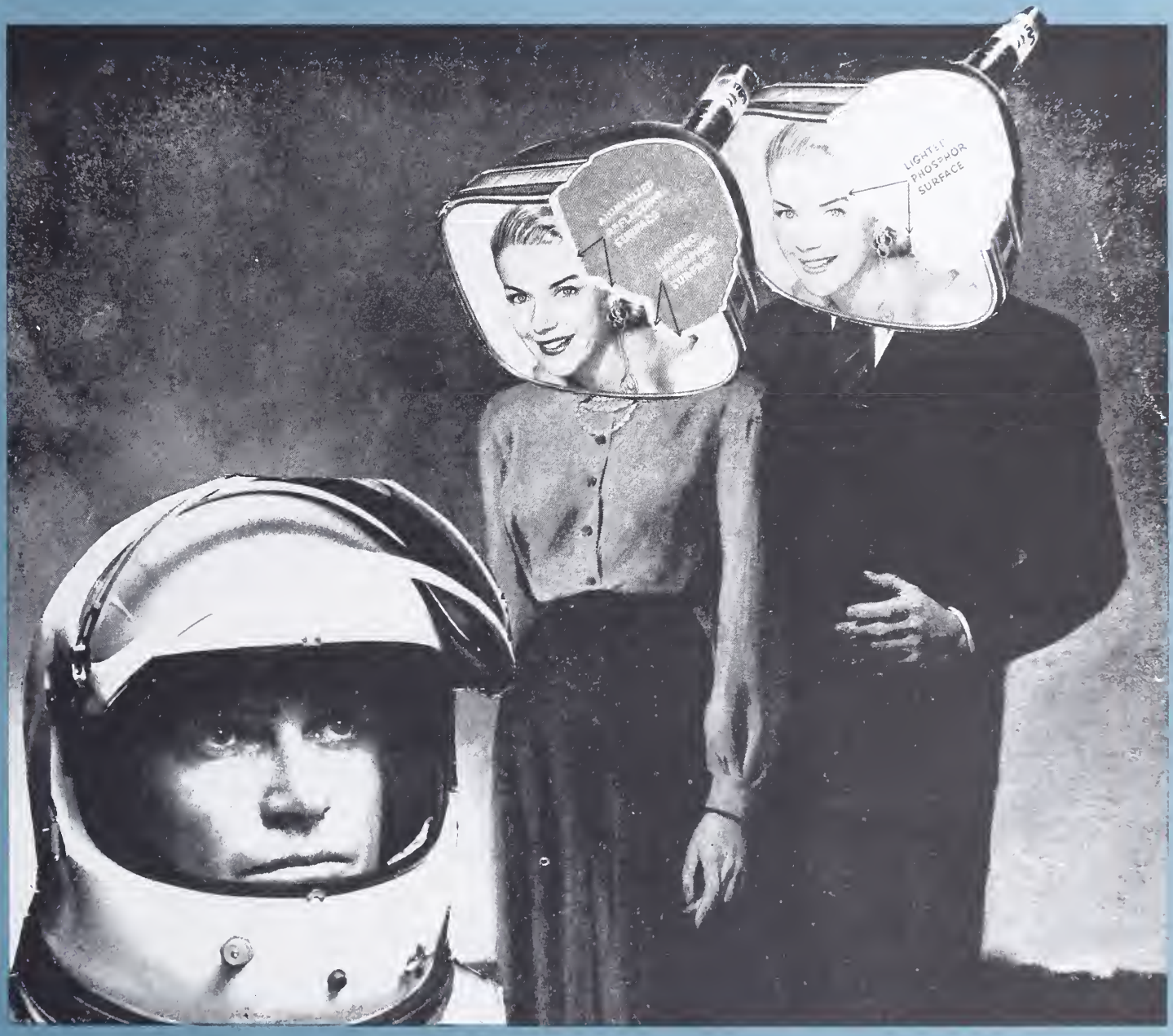
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AIVF/FIVF STAFF MEMBERS: Lawrence Sapadin, executive director; Ethan Young, membership/programming director; Kathryn Bowser, festival bureau director; Morton Marks, business manager; Raina Fortini, administrative assistant; Sol Horowitz, Short Film Showcase project administrator.

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COVER: The future is upon us, or close enough for a good look at media's role in it. In this special issue on media books, we review new publications on film distribution, independent film markets, home video, Hollywood stars, popular culture, and other topics. Cover illustration by Sherry Millner.

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CONTINUING EDUCATION

To the editor:

In your May issue you featured a letter from Jack Churchill expressing his frustrations with cable and with the Learning Channel's on-going series of independent works. It will surprise few, I think, to discover that we at TLC share many of his frustrations.

First among those frustrations is something that came as a bit of a surprise: the lack of interest among critics and TV viewers in independent works. To be fair, they are inundated with press materials and pressures from over 40 broadcast and cable networks, many of which think nothing of putting a million dollars plus into promoting a series or even an individual program.

Clearly, we are unable to match—or even come close to matching—such budgets. However, we now for the first time have been able to afford a public relations firm that specializes in promoting television programs. Based in New York and Los Angeles, the agency has an outstanding record in program promotion (including series of independent works). We expect to see a dramatic increase in media coverage with the agency on our team.

A second frustration Churchill expressed was that of locating TLC on his local cable system. Each cable system determines 1. whether or not to carry TLC, 2. whether to carry it during the day only or also in the evenings, and 3. which channel to carry it on. With well over 1,000 affiliated cable systems representing over 10 million homes, TLC must constantly monitor each of its affiliates to determine carriage, channel numbers, etc. We have one staff person who works full-time just updating such information.

While we attempt to give callers the best information possible, cable systems can change channels, etc. at will. The truth is that they are—or certainly should be—immediately responsive to calls from their subscribers. I suggest to Churchill and all other cable subscribers that, when you're in search of TLC or any cable network, you call the system's administrative offices and insist upon speaking to the marketing or community affairs/promotion director. If one of them can't give you a straight answer, go to the system manager. While the cable system is our customer, you are the system's consumer and your business is very important to them. If none of the above works, call me personally or my colleague, Judy Ballangee. We'll do our best to run interference for you and get the answers you need.

A third frustration is that newspapers are unable to carry complete cable listings in most communities. One of the problems facing TLC is that, at 10 million homes, we're not yet one of the "big guys." We're tackling that problem, too, with the full support of our board of directors which has charged us to pull out all the stops to double our subscriber numbers as quickly as possible. At 20 million or more TLC will start to appear regularly in the TV listing sections of many, many more newspapers.

As for our programming, we obviously do not agree with Churchill, who seems not to understand exactly what TLC's programming is all about. As an educational and lifelong learning network, we target a number of specific audiences from young adults to older Americans. We certainly do have cooking, gardening, and other leisure-time programs that respond directly to research showing that they are the programs most requested by retirees and other older citizens who have free time to enjoy such activities.

Our commitment to independents and to building a large TV audience for their work is irrefutable. That commitment extends to the creation of a new "Weekend Showcase" in prime time beginning this fall. The showcase is exclusively for independent work (initially "The Independents Project" series) and is designed to give them a permanent "TV home" that viewers can build viewing habits around.

When we first began what we call "The Independents Project" to develop these on-going series, we were under no illusions. We knew that it would take time—and plenty of it—to win the confidence of the independent community, to focus media attention on the series, and to build our network to the level that would provide a sizable national audience for our independent showcase series. We're not there yet, but we're well on our way. And, while we appreciate constructive criticism from any source, we also hope that readers of *The Independent* will offer their support as well. We share the same dream—to give independents and their works the national TV distribution, audience attention, and media support they so richly deserve. Together we have a very good chance of making that dream come true.

—Robert J. Shuman
president, The Learning Channel
Washington, DC

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

To the editor:

I wish to clarify an incident referred to in your June 1987 "In and Out of Production" column. The column quotes Chris Kraus as saying that her film *How to Shoot a Crime* was "'banned' at Film/Video Arts, where technicians refused to work on any aspect of it." Chris is a long-standing client of Film/Video Arts. In the case she refers to, F/VA was neither passing judgment on the artistic merit of her piece nor censuring its content, as the quote suggests. Our two editors, after having worked on the piece, made *personal* decisions that some of the footage involved was too grisly for them to work with. There were no other technicians available, so we urged Chris to continue using our facility and suggested she try to find her own editor. Instead, she chose to go elsewhere. Chris remains a valued client and is most welcome to return at any time.

—Rodger Larson
executive director, Film/Video Arts
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GOING OUT OF BUSINESS: THE DECLINE OF NEW YORK FILM LABS

New York City filmmakers, do you know where your originals are? Over the past few years, small film labs in Manhattan, from Cineffects to Film Elements, and, most recently, Huemark, have closed abruptly, often without notifying their clients. The list goes on: Filmtronics, Multicolor, Bebel and Bebel, Control Lab, Movielab Inc. Speaking about one of the casualties, Control Lab, Jacob Burckhardt complains, "They went out of business before anyone even found out." Like many of his distraught colleagues, Burckhardt arrived at the lab to find armed security guards barring him from entering in order to retrieve his negatives. He spent the following two weeks proving that his accounts had been fully paid before he could get his negatives from the bank that had repossessed Control's property.

Some filmmakers report incidents where they practically had to storm a lab and rescue their negatives, even after they had justified that their accounts were clear. *The Good Fight* coproducer Mary Dorr's calls to Huemark were unanswered and her messages unreturned. Her attempts to regain possession of originals were consistently stalled by the lab's owners until, finally, with the help of the building's management she and a colleague entered the vault and left with their materials. Others have not been so lucky. One filmmaker, unnotifed of Film Elements' demise, later found that two of his films were being held by the labs' owners. Unable to pay "ransom fees," he has not seen his films since.

Lab owners mired in debt to banks find that they can't predict when their creditors will repossess, accounting for these crisis scenarios. The increasing number of bankruptcies of Manhattan labs may be attributed to the inability of these labs to diversify their facilities to accomodate the growing use of video, resulting in declining print orders, high rent, and a difficult economic climate. One lab, Huemark, went under after a robbery of all the video equipment they had acquired to supplement their income from film processing. Another, Movielab Inc., closed its film division; renamed simply Movielab, it is now a full video house. Incursions by video, however, cannot entirely explain these closings. Al Santana, a veteran filmmaker, offers another view: "These labs were not dedicated to film, but to the dollar. Their hearts were not in it." Santana complains that one lab he used did not process the prints in house, but sent them out. Such indifference, he believes, sacrificed his print of *Voices of the Gods*, which was processed with the timing entirely off.

The advice frequently offered filmmakers in distress is to maintain communication with their labs. "If your negative hasn't been active, why should a lab care about it?" reasons Burckhardt. Since labs are performing a service by keeping originals between print orders, Howard Goldstein of TVC Labs advises filmmakers to stay in touch: "Send a periodic inventory of your films and their elements to the lab at least once a year to remind them of what they have that's yours." Filmmakers should educate themselves about the dangers of leaving their originals unchecked.

Vigilance, however, will not reverse the precarious financial position of the labs that process and print 16mm. Addressing this problem and its implications at the recent gathering of the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers in New York City, New York State Council on the Arts Film Program director B. Ruby Rich commented, "The independent sector has always been subsidized—by commercial users. As they move to video, independents may find theselves in a situation akin to that of film preservation. Public funds will have to be found. Think about whether a national film lab may be necessary in the next five to 10 years."

Without such an institution, the shortage of storage space for films that results from lab closings remains a daunting problem facing many filmmakers. "The labs were doing a great service by keeping our films," admits Burckhardt. "Some labs even assume the unwritten responsibility of archives," adds Rick Stanberry of Anthology Film Archives. Without them, filmmakers must turn to labs that charge fees for holding negatives or to friends whose apartments are not fire traps. To the dismay of an already overworked staff, Anthology Film Archives has been unofficially delegated the morgue for many of the originals abandoned by some labs: specifically, Filmtronics, Bebel and Bebel, Cineffects, and Control Lab. Despite their desire to hold originals, Anthology is running out of space and hesitant to take on more orphaned film originals. "We are trying to get more funds and volunteers to help catalogue what's here," explains Stanberry.

In answer to what seems an irreversible trend, however, a more satisfactory solution to secure storage of film originals already exists: film archives. Jan-Christopher Horak, curator of film at the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, one of the country's major archives, states that his museum welcomes donations of independent work, without restrictions on subject matter or style. The Eastman House will store the work, which remains the property of the copyright holder, in exchange for the right to produce reference prints for internal, educational uses; all other uses are contingent upon the approval of the owner of the material. Furthermore, the archive promises ready access to the materials and full cooperation should the filmmaker or distributor require prints [see Horak's letter to *The Independent*, June 1987]. Other archives, including the Library of Congress, will make similar arrangements. In light of the labs' unpredictable futures, independent filmmakers should cultivate their relationships with these institutions dedicated to preserving the work of the past.

QUYNH THAI

CANNES DO

Amidst all the competing, critiquing, politicking, and posturing that regularly attends the Cannes Film Festival, the Independent Feature Project's headquarters at the Ancien Palais provided a port in a tropical storm. IFP's second annual program at the megafest, entitled "Le Salon du Cinéma Indépendant," coincided with the fortieth anniversary of Cannes. And this year the IFP organized a program that was quite a bit more ambitious than in 1986.

Plans began last fall to join forces with *American Playhouse* and the French/American Film Workshop and to rent the second floor of the Ancien Palais for headquarters and cosponsored events. The program featured a reprise of the 1986 Independent Directors' press conference and reception and three seminar panels, "State of the States," featuring acquisition and distribution executives from sponsoring organizations such as Alive Films and Atlantic Entertainment; "Independents Abroad," about theatrical distribution in five major non-U.S. territories (the U.K., Scandinavia, France, Germany, and Australia); and a panel of French and U.S. directors discussing their work in an era of rising independent budgets and greater creative control. The panel included directors Ken Friedman and Pierre Sauvage and was moderated by IFP founding director, Sandra Schulberg.

The *mistral*, an aggressive cool stormy southern wind known to appear in May on the Mediterranean, blew the hardest on the day that IFP and its collaborators set aside for their main event, May

13. The press conference on independent film and the reception afterwards were held on the roof of the Ancien Palais, where participants fought to drown out the noise of the wind in their microphones. Annette Insdorf, translator, critic, and professor of film, moderated a group of directors and producers. In the directors' camp were John Sayles (in Cannes with his new film *Matewan*, a Directors' Fortnight selection), Henry Jaglom (whose *Someone to Love,* featuring Orsons Welles' last performance, was selected for the Un Certain Regard section of the festival), and Yurek Bogayevicz, a theatrical director of Polish descent whose first film, *Anna*, will be released by Vestron in early fall. The producers were Barry Opper (Wayne Wang's *Slamdance*), Joe Kelly (Diane Keaton's *Heaven*), Paula Mazur (Laurie Anderson's *Home of the Brave*), and Julia Phillips, who has worked both sides of the fence with *Taxi Driver, The Sting, Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and, most recently, the independent pic *The Beat.*

The discussion proved to be one of the most animated of the festival press conferences, due primarily to Henry Jaglom's somewhat irritating insistence that he did not belong on the same panel with the others because he considered himself not an independent filmmaker but a "maverick." While others talked about financing, Jaglom talked about art. Julia Phillips in particular took his bait, and the two exchanged insults as well as points of view, both making valid points along the way. Jaglom: "There are people who make films for money and those who do it for the same reason that an artist paints, to get that expression out." Phillips: "I'm sorry, Henry, films are not paintings. Movies are where art and commerce meet. Money is just a measure of how many people saw your film." It should be noted that Jaglom is independently wealthy and able to finance most of his approximately $1-million forays out of his own pocket. Nevertheless, he was a welcome devil's advocate in the sort of discussion that generally suffers from too many heads nodding in agreement. And he offered some more interesting distinctions between people who make movies than the source of their funding.

In addition, IFP helped promote seven films at the festival—*Heaven, Matewan, Home of the Brave, The Glass Menagerie* (directed by Paul Newman), the Coen brothers' *Raising Arizona, Someone to Love,* and *Slamdance*—to "heighten the attention to American independent film," says Robert Odell, IFP's market director. "We also provided the space for independent filmmakers to meet people." In addition to other services, Odell points out that IFP's presence in the Ancien Palais may have helped the Directors' Fortnight in its struggle to save the building from threatened condemnation and destruction. The main part of the festival has since moved up the Croisette to a brand new bigger Palais with more screening rooms and better facilities.

Odell says this year's program was a success,

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in part because "it takes a few years to establish a promotional presence at Cannes, and we're gaining promotional and visible momentum." Next year's plan may either bring an expansion of services or a concentration of them. In the meantime, IFP's main event, the Independent Feature Market in the fall, is the next item on their agenda.

JANET WICKENHAVER

Janet Wickenhaver is a freelance writer and screenwriter living in Hoboken.

BRITISH NETS OPEN DOORS TO INDEPENDENTS

Whether the announcements this spring by the "duopoly" of British broadcasting—the British Broadcasting Corporation and Independent Television (ITV)—that both broadcast television systems will obtain 25 percent of their programming from independent producers within the next five years is yet another Thatcherite move toward privatization or a boon for previously unrepresented points of view on TV is difficult to gauge. In any case, this concession to the expressed wishes of the Conservative government signals a restructuring of both the public and private television services, which have traditionally produced all programs in-house. The success of the "25% Campaign," a lobbying effort by independent producers, organized following publication of the government-sponsored Peacock Report on Broadcasting last autumn (recommending that 40 percent of the broadcast schedule should be work commissioned from independents) produced impressive results. The BBC has committed £20-million ($30-million) per year to independent production and guaranteed 500 hours per year by 1990. The ITV followed suit with a promise of 500 hours for independents by 1992.

One of the strongest—and presumably most persuasive—arguments made by the 25% Campaign concerned economic efficiency. Pointing to a comparison between ITV program costs and those of Channel 4, which procures all of its programming from outside producers (50 percent from British independents), the numbers are convincing: "C4's costs are between 18 and 38 percent lower per hour broadcast than those of BBC2, which are in turn lower than BBC1. And BBC1's costs are up to 60 percent below those of ITV." So writes Phillip Whitehead, an ex-Labour Member of Parliment and an independent producer active in the Campaign, in the pages of *Broadcast*. Many independents with access to Channel 4 have also managed to secure co-financing for their projects from outside sources, another factor that appeals to bottom-line watchers.

However, those who advanced the case for greater involvement of independents linked the issue of cost-effectiveness to larger problems looming for British TV: "[T]his is important not because it attunes with any ethos of the present Government but because of its implications for the future of programme-making." The author of this statement in the *Guardian*, independent John Wyver (*Ghost in the Machine, State of the Art*), also mentions the threats to the present system posed by DBS and cable, which will exacerbate the revenue problems projected for both the BBC and ITV in the coming decade. As for the unions representing broadcast workers, who opposed independent contracting beyond Channel 4, Wyver maintains, "There is no reason whatsoever why more independent production should 'tear the heart out of the system,' as ACTT [Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians] Deputy General Secretary Roy Lockett has claimed. External forces from Europe and elsewhere, threaten to do that, unless changes are introduced." The independent lobby emphasized the diversification and enrichment of television programming that could be provided by an expanded pool of talent. Here they again cited the example of Channel 4. Furthermore, they forecast greatly increased opportunities for freelance media workers as well as creative personnel now working for the sheltered, but bureaucratic television institutions.

For analysts in the U.S., however, these events require translation. Endorsers of the 25 percent proposal included a number of large commercial companies (U.S. professional football programs were used as examples of the kind of independent fare that would become available to British audiences). According to *Variety*, "It'll...mean British broadcasters will come to resemble, at least partially, their U.S. counterparts." *Variety*'s prediction is that the action will be dominated by big independent companies like Consolidated, Portman, Merseyside TV, Zenith, and Euston, the latter two being wholly-owned subsidiaries of ITV companies. On the other hand, less commercial, less conventional producers, such as the workshops that have been fostered with Channel 4 funding, may also benefit from the new quotas.

The types of programs that will make it to the air will be determined, to a large degree, by BBC and ITV executives. And what British TV will look like in 1992 (ABC or NBC?) remains unclear. Still, 25% Campaigners maintain that Britain *must* chose between the integration of domestic independents in the broadcast system or succumb to the inevitable competition from European satellite empire builders such as Silvio Berlusconi, Rupert Murdoch, and Robert Maxwell. They contend that they offer the solution for a reinvigorated British TV system: "more and better television, rather than more and worse."

MARTHA GEVER

AUSTIN AFFIRMS ACCESS

The first legal challenge to cable access brought under the 1984 Cable Act has been resolved in favor of access. In Texas, retired Judge John Phillips denied Austin CableVision's franchise modification request, through which the cable company sought to eliminate the major portion of their community access requirements. The judge's nonbinding opinion—the outcome of a voluntary hearing process agreed upon by the city and the cable operator—was delivered in June and subsequently approved by both the Austin Cable Commission and City Council.

Austin CableVision, an American Television & Communications Corp. system, first proposed altering their 1981 franchise agreement earlier this year, long before the 15-year contract was due to expire. Motivated by the forecast of a $28-million loss over the life of the contract, CableVision argued that "requiring continued public access support on this scale is commercially impracticable." According to the 1984 Cable Communications Act, commercial impracticability is a justification for releasing a cable operator from specific contract provisions.

The approval of CableVision's request would have decimated one of the country's leading access centers. For well over a decade, Austin has had a high level of community participation in access production. This has been nurtured by a supportive and vital public access center, Austin Community Television, which access advocates often cite as a model. Moreover, community interest in access continues to grow. According to *Austin Access*, ACTV's newsletter, last year ACTV scheduled well over 3,000 hours of original public access programming—a record year. Equipment check-outs increased by 15 percent, and the number of shows produced with access equipment doubled between 1985 and 1986.

Nonetheless, Austin CableVision proposed doing away with 10 out of the required 13 access channels. The system currently has eight operative channels and five more due. Of these eight, three are public access, which Austin CableVision sought to consolidate into a single channel. The three educational channels were to be merged into one, and the two government channels combined. The five pending channels were not to be activitated. The cable company also sought to sharply curtail financial support for access, arguing the slack should be taken up by "city fundraising and private sponsorships." Their proposal stated, "Future annual access support payments, additional access capital requirements, and access studio and equipment maintenance responsibilities should be eliminated [from the franchise agreement]."

Given Austin's lively public access scene, the proposed consolidation of channels could not have been justified by their underuse—a measure the Cable Act permits. While otherwise containing language strongly supportive of community access, the Cable Act allows companies to reclaim unused access channels—thus, the "use it or lose it" rallying cry of access advocates. Instead, Austin CableVision turned to the Cable


THE INDEPENDENT



Act's primary escape clause—the commercial impractibility argument. The company also cited Texas' "reasonableness standard," a state law that permits franchise provisions to be contested in order to guarantee a company a fair rate of return.

When Judge Phillips rejected Austin CableVisions's request, he stated, "In my judgement, each and every modification requested...is inappropriate." The company's debt and requested modifications, he argued, "have little or nothing to do with anything connected with the city." His rejection is "also due to the fact that the relationship between the company's overall debt and its obligations to the city are 'insignificant,' according to the evidence."

Austin CableVision still has the option of contesting this decision in court. It could do so either on economic grounds or it could frame a First Amendment argument, which was not considered in the hearings. However, since the parent company, American Television & Communication, recently lost a significant constitutional fight over access requirements [see "Cable Company Loses in Erie," July 1987], some industry observers believe that ATC might begin to exhibit more discretion in their initiation of court challenges.

PATRICIA THOMSON

STUDIOS TARGETTED BY ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP

A new anti-apartheid organization, Filmmakers United against Apartheid, has been formed in order to put pressure on U.S. film distributors who are still sending their films to South Africa. Founded by Jonathan Demme and Martin Scorcese last March, the group currently includes over 100 feature directors, including heavyweights such as Woody Allen, Bernardo Bertolucci, Francis Coppola, Samuel Fuller, John Huston, Paul Newman, and Billy Wilder, as well as independents like Spike Lee, Susan Seidelman, and Bette Gordon.

The stated purpose of FUAA is "to have movies become part of the UN-endorsed cultural boycott of the Union of South Africa." The boycott, laid out by forty-first session of the UN General Assembly, calls for "all governments and organizations to take appropriate action for the cessation of all academic, cultural, scientific and sports relations that would support the apartheid regime of South Africa, as well as relations with individuals, institutions and other bodies endorsing or based on apartheid."

FUAA's aim is to "start a dialogue between the studios and filmmakers," targeting distributors of U.S.-made and U.S.-financed movies. Its initial tactic will be to send a letter of petition to studio heads and personal contacts. A final draft is anticipated by mid-August, by which time FUAA also expects a substantial increase in its membership.

Although Demme and other FUAA members

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have negotiated clauses in their individual contacts prohibiting the distribution of their films in South Africa, FUAA does not currently plan to lobby its membership to insist upon similar contractual conditions. Rather, the focus will be on getting the distributors to adopt this prohibition as a matter of policy. Currently, the major studios have no provisos of this sort, although some, like Columbia Pictures and Warner Brothers, have publicly stated their opposition to segregated theaters in South Africa.

FUAA has not yet decided what action to take should the studios fail to respond to their petition. But their strategy at this stage is to "take a personal approach," as Demme told *Variety*, and to rely on the gentle art of persuasion, rather than confrontation.

PT

ORGANIZING THE UNORGANIZED: NABET AND IATSE JOIN FORCES

A crack-down on nonunion production in New York City was jointly announced in May by the two major film and videotape technical unions, the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians (NABET) Local 15 and the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees (IATSE) Local 52. The unions have correctly described this cooperative action as "unprecedented," since they have been overt rivals since NABET's formation four decades ago. For independent producers, the positive by-product of this aggressive, "no contract-no work" hard line is a concomitant softening of the unions' position on low budget productions. "Flexibility" is the key word at NABET Local 15, which has begun to discuss "guidelines" for negotiating with lower scale producers. IATSE is attempting to draw up a specific low budget contract.

The locals' initiative against nonunion production, announced in a open letter by Mike Proscia, president and business manager of Local 52, and Raphael PiRoman, business manager of Local 15, is in part preemptive. The locals are attempting to thwart the development of a large, competitive pool of nonunion jobs and nonunion labor in New York comparable to that which has developed in California. Of equal concern is the climbing level of budgets for nonunion productions. As PiRoman wrote in the NABET 15 newsletter, "There have always been non-union features shot in the city but these had almost always been extremely low budget projects which legitimately could not afford to pay union scale or follow union conditions. This has changed. We can now document the fact that films of two million, three million, and above are shooting non-union in New York and we are also seeing projects like *After School Specials* which used to be our terrain shooting non-union here." Calling for an end to all nonunion feature films, television movies, specials, and series production in the city, Proscia and PiRoman warned, "We are giving notice to all those producers who intend to shoot non-union films in this area that it will be to their great benefit to shoot with IATSE or NABET. We are letting these producers know that if they intend to shoot non-union, they will be forced to deal with public union action by both IATSE and NABET." Picket lines and "anything and everything within legal bounds" will be used to support their position and to make it "costly and time consuming for [producers] to not shoot with the unions," PiRoman told *Back Stage*.

The pros and cons of low-budget contracts have been argued back and forth over the years from within the union ranks [see "Talking Union: NABET, IATSE, and Independent Media," May 1986]. NABET, whose membership considered and voted down a low budget contract in 1985, still prefers to negotiate project by project. "It's obvious we have to come to terms with the new generation of low budget pictures," says NABET president Martin Bernstein. "But it's very sticky creating a special contract. You'd be surprised how many people line up claiming to be low budget." PiRoman concurs: "Producers have to prove their budget is what they say it is and that their needs are real." For NABET, after the very real difficulty of establishing a budget ceiling, there is the problem of sorting out who legitimately qualifies—one of the principle stumbling blocks for a low budget contract. But this is becoming more feasible, PiRoman believes, as the lines of communication open up between NABET and IATSE, allowing a comparison of documentation on a given producer. NABET also anticipates working more closely with the Screen Actors Guild, which has both low-low-budget and low-budget contracts, and similarly sharing information to help identify bona fide low budget producers .

In place of a low budget contract, NABET is now attempting to set up guidelines to clarify where there is room for play and where the union will hold fast in the negotiation of special contracts. According to PiRoman, concessions will not be granted on pay scale, turn-around, overtime, and other basic conditions that the union has long fought for. Rather than laying out a "shopping list" of those areas that are subject to negotiation, PiRoman and Bernstein emphasize that lower scale producers should know NABET will be adopting a greater flexibility toward their special needs.

Meanwhile, IATSE has been in and out of talks since January with the Alliance of Motion Picture and TV Producers about a low-budget contract—something international president Alfred DiTolla has been advocating as part of his overall organizing strategy. As with NABET, the impetus has been union worker unemployment, resulting from the growth of nonunion competition in right-to-work states, such as Florida and Texas, and in other countries, particularly Canada. Again, the sticking point has been in deciding what constitutes a low budget producer. IATSE originally

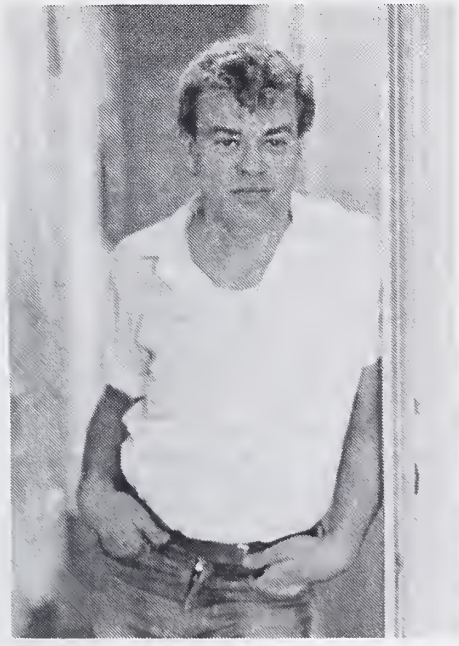
proposed a $4-million ceiling, with no exceptions. The producers' group countered with a $6-million budget, and exempted the salaries of producers, executive producers, directors, writers, and actors. Under this definition, productions of over $15-million could be considered "low budget." In May the talks stalled completely, but petitions from union membership to return to the table may prove to be the catalyst for a final bargaining effort and eventual contracts.

PT

CURT McDOWELL: 1945-1987

San Francisco underground filmmaker Curt McDowell died of AIDS-related illnesses in early June at the age of 42. Best known for his hard-core gothic horror feature, *Thundercrack!*, his other work included *Sparkle's Tavern*, *Loads*, and *Taboo: The Single and the LP*. Thematically, his films were divergent but all expressed McDowell's unzipped appetite for life and fantasies at their prickliest. They simultaneously ridiculed and revelled in sexual yearning—both his audiences' and his own. He told an interviewer in 1981: "I ask myself, 'Why am I predominantly homosexual?' That's what I want to know. It's something that has to come from somewhere, and I'm fascinated by it."

A central figure among Bay Area independents—as a filmmaker and an active participant in the local scene—McDowell was respected by all contingents for his unifying spirit. The Roxie, one of the country's staunchest independent exhibitors, benefited from his tireless managerial efforts. The 1987 San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Film Festival was dedicated to his memory. His friends and colleagues plan to raise funds to preserve, publish, and distribute his work, which consisted of art, music, costumes, and writings, in



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addition to his films, mostly shorts (distributed by Canyon Cinema). This project is being coordinated by Robert Evans, Roxie Cinema, 3117 16th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

ETHAN YOUNG

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LONG DISTANCE LINKS: SOUTHEASTERN MEDIA PRODUCERS FORUM



Leading the discussion on independent feature filmmaking at the Southeastern Media Producer's Forum were panelists (left to right) Connie Kaiserman, Chris Sievernich, Victor Nuñez, moderator Dick Reed, Tom Yarboro, and Monty Ross.

Courtesy South Carolina Arts Commission

Jan Millsapps

Doug Gore, a slight young man, who works as a projectionist at a Columbia, South Carolina alternative theater, admits with some embarrassment, "I want to produce narrative works." Why the embarrassment? "I think I'm in the wrong part of the country." However, on May 8 and 9 Columbia was the *right* part of the country for Gore and the rest of the 150-plus crowd that gathered for a teleconference on producing and financing independent feature films. The Columbia audience and panel talked back and forth with another panel and audience in Atlanta, Georgia, and the entire event was carried live or taped for later replay by at least 10 other public or cable stations across the country. "I can't believe this is happening in South Carolina," said one participant.

Unlike established centers of feature film production activity, South Carolina still hovers on the edge of the film industry. The state has yet to see an independent feature produced indigenously. "In the past year I've talked to eight or nine people who want to do independent features here," notes Michael Fleishman, director of the South Carolina Arts Commission's regional Media Arts Center, "but they're not sure where to start." The teleconference says Fleishman, "is the first piece in a long process" of developing the film industry in the state.

As a regional event, the teleconference was a "co-idea" developed by Fleishman and Robin Reidy, director of IMAGE, an Atlanta media center, and held in conjunction with the Atlanta Film Festival. According to Fleishman, the teleconference provided an ideal forum for a media community that is stretched out across 10 Southeastern states, functioning "like a kind of regional town meeting." Both Fleishman and Reidy described the teleconference, or the Southeastern Media Producers' Forum, the official title, as the biggest event ever held for regional media producers. Besides the South Carolina Arts Commission and IMAGE, other sponsors were the state film offices and educational television networks of both South Carolina and Georgia, the Atlanta and Charleston film festivals, the University of South Carolina Media Arts Department, the South Carolina Motion Picture and Television Association, and Crawford Communications in Atlanta.

Most participants arrived in time for an opening reception in Columbia on the Friday night prior to the Saturday event. While teleconference panelists were entertained at a fancy feast at Columbia's historic Siebels House, the other participants were treated to a more modest spread in an unadorned Radisson Hotel meeting room. They mingled enthusiastically, trading stories of past and future productions. Most came with scripts, or at least with ideas. Kip Hanks of Pensacola, Florida, brought a suitcase full. At 22, he has written seven feature scripts and completed his first dramatic piece with an American Film Institute grant. His current job in a video store inspires him; he says he checks out the terrible movies and realizes he can do better.

Stan Croner of Manassas, Virginia, contrasted with the mostly youthful crowd. He has spent the last 20 years producing independent documentaries in Los Angeles. Now, armed with new ideas, including a script for a feature, he is "in a holding pattern" and looking for a new home base. He thinks it might be South Carolina. Early in the evening, he had already covered his program with names and phone numbers of regional resources. "I had no idea all this was here," he says, waving to his list. And there's Mary Jo Richter, recently relocated from Chicago, where she had worked in public television, to Beaufort, South Carolina. During the reception, she made valuable contacts among South Carolina's professional media community that might help her with a children's opera project she wants to produce. "There are more resources and talent here than people realize," says Fleishman. "A lot of times we are iso-

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lated or frustrated because we can't put all the pieces together—not knowing about the person 10 miles down the road thinking the same thing."

While the teleconference was the advertised reason to be in Columbia for the weekend, many also came for the collegiality. For Carmine D'Alessandro, "producing a feature isn't at the top of my list," but, as president of the South Carolina Motion Picture and Television Association, he is interested in making contact with the state's media professionals. No one seemed concerned when the wine ran out about halfway through the reception; they kept on talking. Most didn't notice when several of the panelists showed up late in the evening, impressed thus far with their royal treatment. "Wait 'til the Florida film commission hears about this," independent producer/director Victor Nuñez said of his flight on South Carolina's state jet.

Early Saturday morning the teleconference proper got underway. To accommodate the large audience, South Carolina Educational Television moved its operations into the University of South Carolina Law School auditorium. While technicians set up cameras, raised banks of lights, and sat in each panelist's chair for mic checks, panelists arrived and were led aside for make-up. First-come participants were encouraged by the floor manager to sit in the middle to "look like a crowd" for the cameras, but by the 10 a.m. starting time, the crowd was real, and several monitors in the back of the auditorium allowed latecomers the best view of the proceedings.

Each panelist made a brief presentation before questions from the audience were entertained. Most interesting were the reasons given for working independently. New York producer/director Connie Kaisermann discovered that the subject matter of her first feature, *My Little Girl*—incarcerated children—was not commercial enough. "It's the flip side of teenage films where the heroine's main concern is what to wear to the prom," she explained. Nuñez of Tallahassee, Florida, producer/director of *Gal Young Un* and *A Flash of Green*, is interested in "a wider range of world views than Hollywood allows." At first reluctant to participate on the panel because he "hasn't done much lately," his observations on the differing standards of commercial and independent filmmaking impressed the audience. "He's the poet among them," whispered Carol Ward, who teaches English and film studies at Clemson University.

Tom Yarboro, vice president of the Earl Owensby Studio, with facilities in both North and South Carolina, provided a contrast to Nuñez' remarks with his film clip from *Chain Gang*, a shoot-em-up-and-chase-em-down-the-country-road, action-adventure film. His interest in movie-making, first as an investor and now as a producer, is in "the sizzle of the idea." Partly because he believes minorities are not accepted there, producer and actor Monty Ross just likes "to kick Hollywood in the behind" from time to time. After the amazing success of *She's Gotta Have It*, which he and Spike Lee produced for $175,000, Ross described the relative ease with which they got $5-million for their next feature, *School Daze*. "We may not get this much money again, so we decided to do everything we wanted to," he said gleefully. As evidence, he sported a flashy black satin *School Daze* jacket.

Perhaps the most impressive story of the day, however, was the long but engaging account of the difficulties encountered by established producer Chris Sievernich (*Paris, Texas* and *Stranger than Paradise*) while trying to get backing for his recent project with director John Huston for a feature based on James Joyce's story "The Dead." After several international packages fell through, he "xeroxed a bunch of scripts and budgets and drove around L.A. like a traveling salesman." He pitched his idea to at least four studios a day until he finally found the right combination, an executive who was also a Huston and Joyce fan. "When people say no, just take it as a confirmation of your project," he advised the audience.

During the lunch break participants seemed encouraged, not by the uncertain process of producing an independent feature but that the panelists were proof that it could be done. South Carolina independent producer/director Nancy Yasecko accurately remarked that the panel provided information on "how it's been done, not on how to do it." Nan Robinson, vice president of a Columbia-based commercial production company now branching out into other areas, including feature production, commented, "What I got was the need to be driven and obsessive about it.... Those are the people who make it."

If the morning panel was lively and anecdotal, the afternoon panel gathered in Atlanta—an eclectic group of financiers, distributors, consultants, writers, and a film commissioner—provided more factual information, but not without controversy. Janet Grillo of New Line Cinema drew criticism because her company takes no risks by producing specialty films, relying instead on the sure box-office draw of a *Nightmare on Elm Street* (part whatever). When asked point-blank by a member of the audience how to get a script to interest someone at New Line, she replied, "It must be irresistible." She was not encouraging to first-time producers.

Other controversial topics included whether a first-time producer should work through a producer's rep for the best marketing and distribution deal. While Grillo recommended this, Columbia panelist Nuñez was doubtful. After Atlanta panelists Norman Bielowicz, Georgia state film commissioner, and *Athens, Ga.* producer Bill Parks described how their state had made the transition from a location state to a resident industry state, South Carolina participants wondered out loud why their state had not done the same. South Carolina film office manager Lisa Goodwin blamed it on the state's financial climate and

the lack of education within the business community.

The finale of the day was the producers' party in the lobby of South Carolina's new State Museum, a renovated textile mill. As at the opening reception, the guests made the most of their chance to talk to each other and to the panelists, and did not seem to mind the lack of beverage choices—white wine, keg beer, or Southern-sweet iced tea. While one man shouted for the band to stop playing because he could not talk over the noise reverberating in the bare brick area, most politely stepped outside to carry on their conversations. Some immediate results of the teleconference were evident: for the participants, inspiration, renewed interest, and valuable contacts with other media professionals in the region; for the panelists, admiration for those who organized the event and new knowledge, surprising at times, of resources available within the region. Through a series of short presentations in Columbia at the end of the teleconference, many were encouraged to find out about new programs and facilities, such as the Owensby Studio in South Carolina, which is open to independents, a small film studio in Walterboro, South Carolina, "halfway between New York and Miami," and a film training program in the works at Trident Technical College in Charleston.

The success of the teleconference has already helped spawn related events. The South Carolina Film Office says it is planning a corporate forum to interest the state's investors in supporting an indigenous film industry, and a producer at the state's educational television network is interested in programming more independent films. While some pieces of the process may still be missing—the lack of entertainment lawyers or a solid investment base in South Carolina—others are falling into place. The state arts commission is exploring funding for script development and multi-year funding for feature projects. The film office says it is committed to working with independents. "It's up to the people in the state," says Fleishman, "to make it clear to us or to the film office how they would like to see the industry develop and what they need from us."

Will the regional teleconference become an annual event? "We've talked about it and laughed," says Reidy about post-teleconference conversations with Fleishman. Then she adds more seriously, "Maybe every two years."

Jan Millsapps is an independent filmmaker in Columbia whose short animated and experimental films have been screened internationally.

AFTERIMAGE

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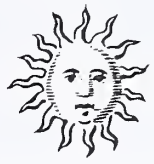
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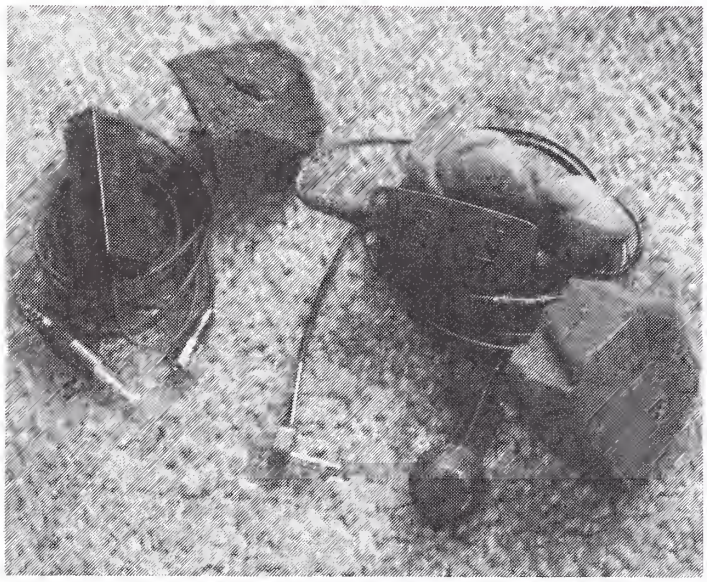
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SUCCESSFUL AUDIO BEFORE DIGITAL



Beginners route to good audio: wind-screened lavalier microphones used as close as comfortable (preferably one foot to three feet from speakers, further for ambience), priced from $15 (left) to $200 (right).

Photo: Bob Brodsky

Bob Brodsky and
Toni Treadway

Technological innovations affecting audio recording are appearing at an alarming rate for producers who, while primarily concerned with the content of their work, must be involved with production equipment, its capabilities and limitations. The scene is changing so fast that what we had come to think of as conventional audio techniques may not be conventional for long. Many in the film production world are using or aspiring to digital recording and mixing; others are involved in computer interfaces that not only control audio material but actually create the material. Still, a typical independent film or video producer (if such exists) will be using manually operated analog equipment for a long time to come. Even the Sony PCM 8mm recorder has not risen to the top of many technical wish-lists because it is not as versatile as, say, the Tascam Porta-One Studio. With analog tools and basic technique, very good audio is possible. Good techniques for location recording and postproduction audio have been polished long ago. The skills to apply them—judging from what we hear on our screens—are still in relatively short supply.

Of the many independent works we see only a few have really good audio. Most lost it on location; many others lost it in the mix. Recording voice well is not easy in environments where independents often work. The subjects themselves do not know how to work with a given type of microphone, and often the desired audio is in competition with undesirable ambience, e.g., refrigerators clunking on and off, children playing in the street, air conditioner motors, fluorescent light transformer hum, wind, microphone and cable movement and handling, and film camera motor noise reflected off hard surfaces.

The phenomenon of selective aural attention enables us to screen out these unwanted sounds with our ears. But these kinds of distracting sounds stand out in playback and cannot be eliminated in the sound mix without significantly altering the quality of other, desirable audio. They must be eliminated from the recording or greatly ameliorated by changing the type of microphone used or by relocating the mic. Other options, such as banning children from the street or moving to another location, are often not available or are unacceptable to the independent filmmaker.

MICROPHONE PLACEMENT

The majority of satisfactory voice recordings we have heard are achieved with tiny lavalier microphones, carefully positioned close to the subject(s) and well-shielded from wind. This experience flies in the face of most of what is taught, but for many independents omnidirectional lavalier mics are easier to control than those with cardioid (directional) or hypercardioid ("shotgun") characteristics. What matters is not whether a lav is expensive or inexpensive, but its placement. Since they are tiny, users seem to know that they have to place then at close range. Six inches below the chin works fine for one person, one foot below the chin for picking up two people in close dialogue, and on a table in the midst of a group, closer to a more soft-spoken person than to others. One of the more successful recordings we have heard from a one-person crew using the latter technique was by Carlyn Saltman, filming *The Blooms of Banjeli* in Togo. Her subjects were discussing the construction of a ceremonial iron smelter, and Saltman literally tossed the wind-screened mic into the center of their palaver. Not only did she capture the voices and the sounds of their body movements, but, she told us, the limited pick-up characteristic of the microphone prevented the sounds of the nearby village (mopeds and shouting) from being recorded.

From our own experience, we can attest to failure in our attempt to record five soft-spoken Peace Corps returnees sitting around our apartment some years ago. We used high quality equipment and two short shotgun mics feeding separate tracks of a tape. The recording was completely overwhelmed with sounds from the street, even though the windows were closed. At the time of recording we were barely aware of these sounds, but the shotgun mics, when pointed at speakers with their backs to the windows (acting like tympani) and hard walls (effective reflectors), picked up a very different soundscape. The positioning of a shotgun mic (and cardioid, too) is critical to good pick-up. If you're not expert, use it only with high-volume headphone monitoring.

RECORDING LEVEL

With improvements in analog recorders, the hiss induced by the recording process has been greatly reduced, especially since the incorporation of on-board dbx or Dolby noise reduction systems. Twenty years ago a good recording meant paying careful attention to volume levels, riding the thin line between distortion from over-recording or system noise from under-recording. Now, even inexpensive cassette recorders (used with good quality tape) have a rather wide window through which to make acceptable recordings. The problems we encounter come mostly from distortions created by severe over-recording. In postproduction today it is far easier to deal with low levels than with excessively high levels.

Distortions—except some sibilance—cannot be suppressed without severly altering the texture of the audio. On the other side, the hiss heard when boosting a low-level recording can often be frequency-identified, bracketed (or nearly so), and effectively reduced using a notch filter or a parametric equalizer with a "Q" control. Often it can be done without sacrificing the intelligibility of

speech, because hiss frequencies lie mostly above speech frequencies. Then, too, there are such devices as the Aphex Aural Exciter to replace lost harmonics.

When using super 8 sound cameras that have only auto level settings, the best choice in most situations is the low level setting ("for recording loud sounds"), even when the environment is not noisy. With a wind-screened lavalier mic on a long reliable cord a one-person crew can perform very well. A two-person team (with lav mic clipped to a chop stick and the cable taped to it) can produce quite acceptable audio.

STEREO

Stereo recording is clearly a neglected option for low-budget productions intended for video or gallery exhibition. There are, however, a few points to remember: Always use a single-unit stereo microphone. This will eliminate two of the more common problems of multiple microphones—phase cancellation and difficulty in following the action. Good stereo microphones can be found for under $100 (and almost all current recorders are stereo). Stereo mics require especially good wind-screening and careful attention to positioning, but they are definitely worth the effort. Monophonic super 8 single system audio can be used as a guide in postproduction for replacement with stereo audio recorded on a separate (non-synchronous) recorder.

MULTI-TRACK POSTPRODUCTION

For the past five years, beginning with Super Beta, equipment manufacturers have produced a slew of inexpensive high-quality audio formats. In our experience, though, none have the benefit of economy and versatility that the old multi-track analog tape recorders (with Dolby C or dbx noise reduction) continue to provide. Now, with the rapid development of SMPTE controllers for audio and MIDI interfaces, more and more individuals and small media centers will be able to equip themselves for versatile audio postproduction. The biggest problem may not be the money but in becoming familiar with the protocols for the systems.

Without SMPTE a great deal can still be accomplished on ordinary multi-track recorders, beginning with the four-track variety that has been around for over 20 years. At that time they cost about $1,500. Today they exist in cassette form for half the cost, one-tenth the weight, and include variable speed. Used machines are easily maintained. Signal-to-noise ratios are as high as 85db, with sufficient quietness for putting together three separate tracks or one stereo track and one other track (the fourth track must be reserved for some kind sync indication).

In these days, with the proliferation of computer and microprocessor-based systems, some artists are using echo-sync systems that cost less than $750. These are getting better and cheaper. Here's one such system: A Tascam Mini-Studio Porta-One coupled with an Alesis Microverb. And here's what an individual might do with it: When the visuals of a production have been completed or at least timed to length (whether video, super 8 film, slides, performance, or any combination of these), the synchronous audio of the piece is laid down on track one of the Porta-One. If the piece will be synchronous thoughout, some kind of a syncing track needs to be laid down at the same time (on track three) from the original work. (With super 8 film or videotape use the second audio track for this. Talking and noting where other audio elements are to be cued makes a good sync track.) Other sync elements can be laid down onto track two of the Porta-One and given spacial relationships with the Microverb. Finally, these two tracks (plus additional input) can be mixed in short sequences on track four of the Porta-One, with independent equalization for each track and with additional aural positioning through the Microverb. One of the advantages of working in this manner is that the artist must work with the piece as though it were audio only. The results will be superior because deficiencies or flaws in the audio will be much more noticeable without the support of the visual elements.

Where stereo elements are to be introduced during postproduction, it is not practical to work with a four-track recorder; eight or more tracks are needed. However, since these units are not beyond the reach of many media centers (and are virtually standard equipment in video postproduction studios), it is possible to finish everything but the stereo elements and bring them into sync at the last moment (and for the lowest cost). All that is required are precise cues (and if necessary, a monophonic sync indication). Manual echo-syncing (variable speed source stereo matched to mono playback from the multi-track cue as a guide) is possible with readily available equipment.

The variety of sophisticated equipment and softwear that is being hawked is a truly bewildering phenomenon for many independents. It is important that each of us know what works best for us *now* and supplement that knowledge bit by bit.

Bob Brodsky and Toni Treadway are the authors of Super 8 in the Video Age.

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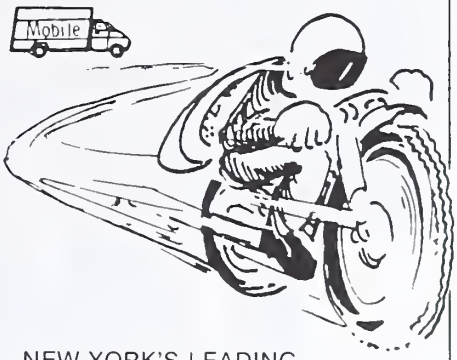
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Off-Hollywood or Bust



Illustration: Sherry Millner

Off-Hollywood: The Making and Marketing of American Specialty Films
by David Rosen, with Peter Hamilton
New York: The Independent Feature Project, 1986, 394 pp., $28.00 (paper)

Eric Breitbart

David Rosen's long-awaited study of American independent feature production (commissioned by the Sundance Institute and the Independent Feature Project), *Off-Hollywood: The Making and Marketing of American Specialty Films*, has finally arrived. True to its subject, *Off-Hollywood* is a mixed bag of long shots, close-ups, slow zooms, and fast pans across the independent feature scene, focusing on 11 films—two documentaries and nine fiction—released by commercial companies in the early 1980s. In an area of the film industry where concrete information is as rare as hens' teeth, Rosen, the IFP, and Sundance should be commended for taking a giant step towards filling the gap. Along with the case studies, *Off-Hollywood* offers charts showing the films' financial performance, cash flow returns, a breakdown of where the money goes from a five dollar ticket (now a six dollar ticket) on $1-million and $5-million grosses, as well as projected advertising costs. Will *Off-Hollywood* tell you how to make a "successful" independent feature? Probably not, but hindsight is a valuable asset in the film business, and much can be learned from other people's mistakes, as well as their successes.

The films surveyed were released by commerical distributors (no self-distributed films were included), and all are classified as "specialty films," that is, films that "share a common humanism," and are "neither racist, sexist, or exploitative." No gratuitous sex, no slash and trash, no exploitation. Negative costs for the films ranged from $1,174,000 (*The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez*) to $125,000 (*The Return of the Secaucus Seven*). Box office grosses were as high as $5-million (*My Dinner with Andre* and *El Norte*) and as low as $100,000 (*Cold Feet*). Most of the productions were funded by a variety of sources—grants, exhibition advances, private investments—although *Cold Feet*, directed by Bruce vanDusen, was financed entirely out of his company's earnings from television commercial production. Each chapter, or case study, follows the same format: a credit list with the principals, distribution plan, opening playdates, names of those interviewed for the study, and a synopsis; next, the film's development, production, and distribution campaigns; third, the marketing, theatrical release, and ancillary markets; and last, a final review and analysis.

In his introduction, Rosen is quite frank about the limitations of the study. Obviously, he could only include films whose participants were willing to provide information, and the study looked for a variety of experiences in a given production, rather than consensus. Other limitations, however, seem to be self-imposed. *Off-Hollywood* begins with a disclaimer stating, "The Study does not represent the views of the Independent Feature Project or the Sundance Institute (which commissioned the study) or of David Rosen, or any other one person or entity. Rather, it expresses the differing, and sometimes conflicting, views of the principals involved in the various films which participated in the study." That is, what we are being offered is the parts, but not necessarily the sum of the parts. Now, it seems to me that among the three parties—Rosen, Sundance, and the IFP—conducting a five-year study, in a field in which all of them have a great deal of knowledge and experience, one or more could both accept responsibility for the statements and analysis in the report and evaluate the information.

This disclaimer is followed by a quote from *New York Times* critic Aljean Harmetz—"When the movie opened, serendipity took over"—which is

intended to set the tone for the book. It is a theme which is echoed in Rosen's conclusion describing successful filmmaking in the U.S. as a "crapshoot." Sure, there are no guarantees in filmmaking, and there's no way to know that a snowstorm and -40° temperatures won't greet your opening (as it did *Wild Style* in Chicago) or that the critics won't pan it. But if there's anything the case studies in *Off-Hollywood* demonstrate, it's that if you make some of the right decisions—something that involves talent and intelligence as much as luck—the odds are a hell of a lot better than throwing the dice in Las Vegas. You don't find grants and private investors by serendipity, and you rarely find audiences by that method either. Only one of the 11 films, *Eating Raoul*, could be said to have "lucked into" an audience, and even this film—and its makers—worked to make it happen.

There is also the question of timing. In most cases, the value of information is reduced the further removed we are from the event, especially in a fast-changing field like specialty film marketing. Most of the films studied in *Off-Hollywood* were released over five years ago, before the study began. Also, there's an "image" problem, something that those interested in independent feature production can understand. In its published form, the book looks like a typescript, complete with spacing errors, words run together, and numerous typos. In the era of desktop publishing, it could have been produced more carefully—and faster.

What is needed in addition to the factual and anecdotal information in *Off-Hollywood* is a *critical* assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of individual films, and of the movement as a whole. It would have also been helpful to include a general chapter on theatrical distribution, based on interviews with theater owners who have been able to find that elusive audience for independent features. For many years, the U.S. independent feature film movement has been a cast of characters in search of a label, something that can be grasped in one hand and easily understood by unsympathetic critics. Hence, in this book, the term "off-Hollywood." But the labels don't help filmmakers, or the public, understand why some films make it and others don't. Comparisons to independent film production in other countries can prove helpful, but only if the differences and specific conditions of production are explained.

In his conclusion Rosen writes, "Like those associated with the French 'New Wave,' 'New German Cinema,' or recent Australian and British film movements, the American specialty filmmakers are a heterogeneous group and do not share a common political or aesthetic vision." In fact, the French "New Wave," which broke almost 30 years ago, *did* share a common aesthetic vision and a common base of film criticism, *Cahiers du Cinema*, that served as a launching pad. One of the lessons to be drawn from the case studies in *Off-Hollywood* is the power of critics to make or break a film and the virtual absence in this country of serious film criticism in magazines or the daily press. Additionally, production and distribution conditions in Britain, Germany, and Australia are quite different from those in the U.S. In Germany and England, for example, the role of television in supporting and promoting independent features remains a far cry from the deplorable conditions here.

One thing none of these "new cinema" movements have had to deal with, though, is Hollywood and the inferiority complex instilled in those who go against the grain. In France and Germany, for example, cinema—not just "big-time" cinema—is taken seriously. Taken seriously by the government, by the press, by television, and by the public. Small films can survive and reach audiences because they don't have to start from scratch each time they come out of the starting gate.

According to *Off-Hollywood*, the number of movie house screens increased from just under 16,000 in 1975 to about 17,500 in 1986. This fact, coupled with the decline in Hollywood-produced films, is offered as proof that "larger theater chains have, therefore, set aside screens in their multiplexes for specialty product." It would have been interesting to know just how many of the large chains are receptive to "specialty product," since most multiplexes don't offer anything more "off-Hollywood" than *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*. The questions of how much of an audience there is "out there" for specialty films is a difficult one that has to be asked again for each new film. For a film to make money in theatrical release, if the case studies in *Off-Hollywood* are any indication, the "art house" audience is not enough; a film must cross over to the general public by word-of-mouth, favorable publicity, or an expensive media campaign. And if this was true in the early 1980s, it will be even more true today, when advertising costs have doubled and a low-budget film is likely to have a budget of several million dollars. As Rosen states in his conclusion, "In the coming years, such truly low-budget films [as *Chan Is Missing* and *Stranger than Paradise*] will continue to be produced. But, unfortunately, they will become the exception. The specialty market is moving toward higher-budgeted product...."

One of the values of independent feature production (and off-Broadway too, for that matter) has been the possibility of experimentation with limited risk—something you can do on a low budget. Established European filmmakers like Alain Tanner and Jean-Luc Godard have always been conscious of the values of working within low budgets. In this country, one could say that Woody Allen does the same thing; by producing a film a year relatively cheaply, Allen cuts down the financial risk. The critical difference is that these directors have an audience—a following—and, of the filmmakers discussed in *Off-Hollywood*, only Louis Malle is "established" in this sense. Unfortunately, the production and financing of independent films is so difficult and time-consuming that directors rarely have the energy to develop a body of work. It is a telling comment that most of the filmmakers in *Off-Hollywood* have not made another feature film since those covered in this study were released.

Why then do people do it? Obviously, commitment and passion have something to do with it. You aren't going to spend three or four years financing, producing, and distributing a film that you don't care about—and this is what has given the independent feature movement its life. The fact that independents like Beth B (*Salvation*), Jill Godmilow (*Waiting for the Moon*), Jim Jarmusch (*Down by Law*), and Lizzie Borden (*Working Girls*), just to name a few, have all made recently-released features means that the "golden age" of independent feature production didn't stop in 1983. Hopefully, the lessons learned from the case studies in *Off-Hollywood* will inform and inspire a new generation of filmmakers who won't have to reinvent the wheel—just tighten a few spokes here and there.

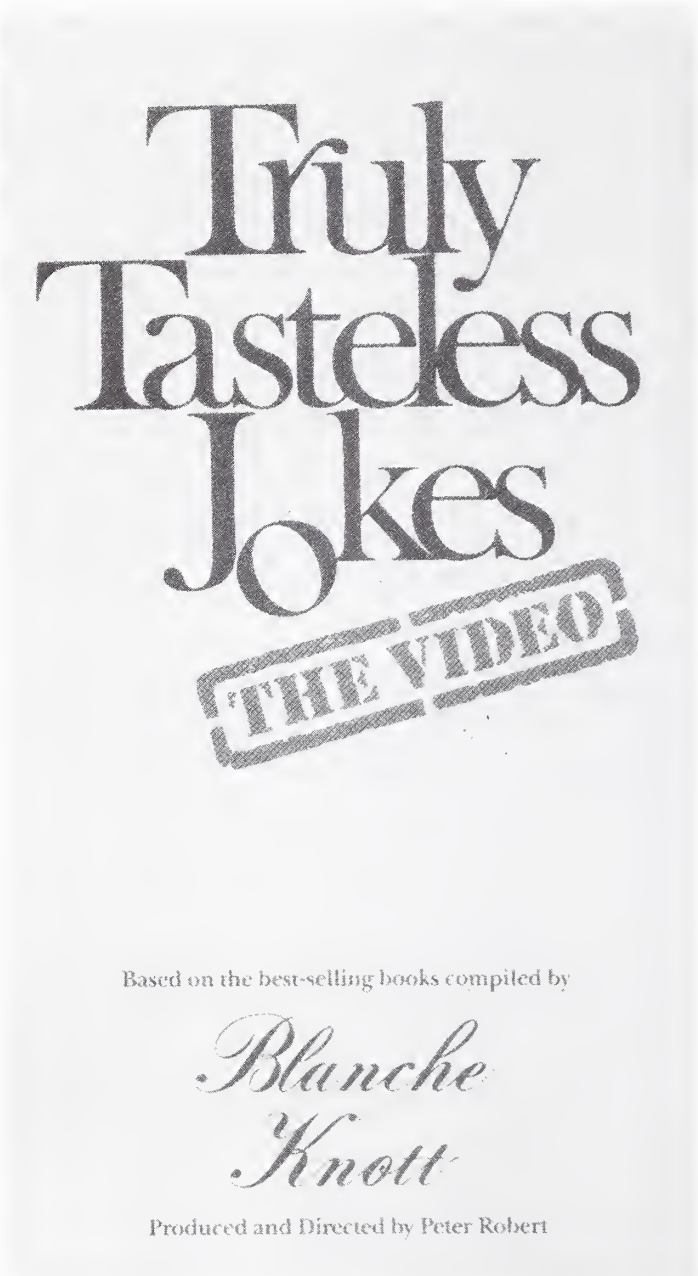
Eric Breitbart is an independent filmmaker and writer.

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The ad for *El Norte* was designed by Cinecom's advertising and publicity director Tom Moody and was intended to reflect the "dream realism" in the film.

Bringing It All Back Home



Michael Weise rates this home videocassette package A+: "There's no doubt what the show is."

Home Video: Producing for the Home Market
by Michael Wiese
Westport, CT: Michael Wiese Film/Video, in conjunction with Focal Press, Stoneham, MA, 1986, 339 pp., $16.95 (paper)

Patricia Thomson

If you're an entrepeneur looking to make a buck in the fast-growing home video biz by getting into program production, *Home Video: Producing for the Home Market* is the book for you. Full of advice and practical pointers on how to develop ideas, pitch projects, target multiple markets, and make the best deal, *Home Video* speaks the language of success in the commercial mainstream. If, however, you've already produced a tape on, say, the war in Nicaragua or a video art piece, and you've been wondering how to make the home market work for you—be prepared to look in vain in *Home Video* for either encouragement or specific answers.

Michael Wiese, who previously authored *The Independent Film and Videomakers Guide* and *Film and Video Budgets*, is vice president of program development at Vestron Video, the world's second largest independent videotape distributor and program manufacturer. *Home Video* is not directly about the success of Vestron Video (though Vestron's products frequently crop up among the many examples discussed). It is about the priorities and values of a company like Vestron. Which means the book's leitmotif is the question, "Is this tape going to sell?" And its lessons are geared toward teaching the entrepeneur how to get a "yes": use a celebrity, stick with a recognizable genre, make sure there's a promotable hook, try to find a title or subject with previous exposure, find a Walter Chronkite or a *National Geographic* to give the tape credibility, and so on.

In his introduction, Wiese takes a moment to give some autobiographical background. Formerly an independent documentary producer, Wiese legitimately claims first-hand experience on both sides of the distributor's desk. But Wiese admits his views have changed since working in a corporate context. Though couched as well-intended advice, he speaks disparagingly of independent producers who are more stimulated by their subject than the potential market for their subject, and suggests that all producers who hope to sell noncommercial works are hopelessly naive or worse. Wiese warns producers against "allowing themselves to be seduced by their own brilliant ideas," explaining, "I learned that there are many reasons to produce programs other than self-discovery and personal growth...to gain ratings, win votes, keep subscribers...to satisfy a specific purpose. As an independent producer my focus had always been on pleasing myself, creating a meaningful program." In other words, if profit is not a production's *raison d'etre*, then it's solipsism.

But because *Home Video* provides an accurate profile of the home video industry circa 1985, it is worthwhile reading even for those who aren't planning to embrace rampant commmercialism. Wiese reminds us that, far from being an infant, the home video industry has reached maturity—and established its patterns—in a few short years. It grossed $3.3-billion in 1985, which is more than the book industry, about equal to pay TV, and almost as much as record and box office revenues. According to the projections cited by Wiese, by 1990 home video revenues for a given film will represent 31 percent of its income, as compared to 23 percent from movie theaters.

For the independent producer unaffiliated with a major distributor, Wiese's portrait of the industry could be sobering—but shouldn't be surprising. The major communications corporations are the ones who supply most of the programming to the nation's 20,000 video rental stores. A full 96 percent share of the market is in the hands of 16 companies, including such household names as CBS/Fox, leading the pack with a 13.5 percent share, followed by Vestron, RCA/Columbia, MGM/UA, Warner, Paramount, MCA, Disney, and Thorn-EMI-HBO, among others. This leaves just four percent to "all others."

The video rental store—the primary consumer—is a tough nut to crack unless a weighty distributor puts its muscle behind a tape. The average rental store, which holds two to three thousand tapes, is bombarded with 400 to

FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

THE INDEPENDENT

Readership Survey

Advertising in *The Independent* has provided an important source of revenue and helped the magazine grow—despite increases in publishing costs and without increases in membership dues. Your prompt response to this readership survey will help us solicit new paid advertising and will also help us identify those products and services you would like to be aware of. Please fill out this questionaire—both producers and nonproducers—and send it to us today. Thank you.

I Are you an:

☐ individual ☐ institution ☐ library

How many people in your household/office/library see your copy of *The Independent:*

II **Occupation/Professional Activities** (check up to 3)

Independent production

☐ film ☐ video

☐ Commercial film production house

☐ Video production studio, postproduction facility

Broadcast TV

☐ network, local ☐ public television

Cable TV

☐ system operations ☐ programming network

☐ Corporate/industrial communications

☐ Equipment manufacturer, dealer, rental

☐ Distribution (film, video, TV program)

☐ Exhibition

☐ Government agency

☐ Advertising agency

☐ Public relations, consultant

☐ Media arts center, museum

☐ Library

☐ University, school

☐ Student

☐ Trade association

☐ Other_____

III **Title:** (check up to 2)

☐ Senior management
☐ Production management, staff
☐ Technical/engineering
☐ Sales, marketing
☐ Other_____

☐ Self-employed
☐ Educator, faculty
☐ Programming
☐ Administrator
☐ Curator

IV **Union affiliation(s):** _____

V State in which you regularly work: _____

State(s) in which you shot during the past 12 months: _____

_____

State(s) in which you plant to shoot during next 12 months: _____

_____

VI **Budgets & expenses**

Average budget (for independent production)_____

Average budget (for other productions over which you have budgetary discretion): _____

What best describes your role in purchasing/renting equipment, facilities, and services:

☐ Make final decision to buy/rent specific makes, models, services, programs, facilities, etc.
☐ Specify or make recommendations
☐ Have no part in buying or specifying

What kind of **equipment** did you buy or rent in the last 2 years: (please indicate which)

B/R Video Cameras
B/R Video Recorders
B/R Video editing equipment
B/R Film Cameras
B/R Film editing equipment
B/R Sound equipment
B/R Grip & lighting equipment
B/R Production supplies & expendibles
B/R Props, costume & workshop rental

Average amount spent on equipment purchases/rental per year:_____

What kind of **services** did you utilize in the past 2 years:

☐ Film labs
☐ Video postproduction
☐ Sound postproduction
☐ Still photographers
☐ Stock film libraries
☐ Music libraries
☐ Television archives
☐ Insurance
☐ Legal
☐ Payroll, accounting
☐ Promotion agencies or consultants
☐ Catering
☐ Van rental
☐ Special shipping & customs

Average spent on services per year:_____

VII Do you:

Own a computer: Y/N
What kind: ☐ IBM or compatible ☐ Macintosh ☐ other_____
Own a VCR: Y/N
Rent/acquire tapes through: ☐ stores ☐ direct mail ☐ other_____
Attend film/video festivals or conferences: Y/N
Average number per year?_____
Airline travel: number of round trips per year_____
Car rental: frequency per year_____

VIII Are you a regular reader (have read at least 3 of the past 4 issues) of:

☐ American Film ☐ Film Comment
☐ Back Stage ☐ Millimeter
☐ Broadcasting ☐ Variety
☐ Channels ☐ Multichannel News
☐ Videography

IX Suggestions for advertising of other services, equipment, etc. that you would find useful in *The Independent:*

fold here and staple

place
stamp
here

THE INDEPENDENT
625 Broadway, 9th floor
New York, NY 10012

Attn: Managing Editor

fold here and staple

500 new titles each month. Twenty-five cassettes are purchased each week, of which 10 to 20 are copies of the new "A" blockbuster titles, like *Beverly Hills Cop* and *Top Gun*. If the cash flow has been good, a few "B" titles might make it under the wire. But unless the retailer is feeling extremely flush and venturesome, the "C"s, "D"s, and any other material generally go overlooked.

It's even tougher for nonfeature producers. Rental stores are feature film environments. If one is going to compete, Wiese advises, then play by the established rules. For example, if it's not a movie, package it like one anyway. Wiese gives the packaging for *Hooker*, a "hard hitting," talking-head documentary on prostitutes and call girls, an A+ rating: "Because documentaries are not the most popular home video form and movies are, the program is sold more like a movie. The key art is reminscent of the top-grossing *Angel*. The title itself is lean and descriptive, and packs a wallop when combined with the artist's rendering. Again, right away, you know what to expect." Do you? The cover art—a leggy, nubile streetwalker bending down to the window of a Corvette—doesn't exactly cry out "talking head interviews." Similarly, an unsuspecting customer would surely think Alan and Susan Raymond's verité documentary *The Police Tapes* is a fast-action cop show on the basis of its cover art.

The good news is that if a producer doesn't want to play by these rules, there are a growing number of alternatives to video rental stores—among them direct mail, publishers, book, toy, and record stores, and video clubs. As VCR ownership climbs to 40 percent of U.S. households and higher, such options are just beginning to be economically viable. Wiese's discussion of these new marketing venues—and what kinds of product work best where—is one area where noncommercial producers might find some provocative information. Again, while *Home Video*'s emphasis is on marketing "hot sellers," Wiese does point out what venues are more successful for what he calls "special genres"—public domain movies, instructionals, documentaries, etc. He takes a rather dim view of self-distribution, however, and skims over it in four pages, reasoning that—unless a tape is guaranteed to sell over 1,000 units at a relatively high price—"the economics simply may not work out." In addition, he argues, most producers generally don't want to be in the distribution business. This is not much help to those who are, by choice or necessity.

Whether one is commercially oriented or not, *Home Video* serves as a concise and comprehensible guide to such matters as limited partnerships, rights, royalties, guild payments, marketing tools, income projections, and other nuts and bolts issues. Wiese walks through the process of negotiating a contract, for example, explaining what's binding and when, and concludes with a sample contract to illustrate terms and terminology. Samples of licensing agreements for talent, stock footage, and music are also included.

Much of the advice Wiese offers is simply common business sense—which always bears repeating. Preliminary homework is a constant theme. He repeatedly stresses the value of entering into business discussions with informed questions, such as "What kind of advance do they offer? How long will it take to recoup the advance before the producer begins sharing overages? How many years will the distributor want an exclusive license? What royalty percentage will be given? Is the royalty based on gross receipts or net receipts?" And he insists that contracts can and should be negotiated: "If you simply accept the distributor's 'standard contract,' then you are accepting a contract that is written and designed by the distributor and may not necessarily reflect your best interest. Standard contracts can be rewritten and redrafted." Throughout the book, Wiese offers basic, lucid advice on the other aspects of the business as well, from the initial pitch to the media campaign.

Wiese is bullish about the market for nonfeature programming. He notes that the motion picture studios have already released two-thirds of the films in their vaults. And, once VCR owners have had time to go through their top-40 movie favorites, they begin searching out new and even nonfeature material. Wiese predicts this trend will gather steam as VCR-owning households begin acquiring a second machine and the demographics shift to incorporate a lower age group.

Certainly, from where he sits at Vestron, the future would look bright. But the unanswered question in *Home Video* is whether the emerging alternative markets will accomodate alternative, noncommercial producers, or whether they too will eventually be locked up by the giants like CBS/Fox and Vestron.

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Money Matters

Securing Your Organization's Future: A Complete Guide to Fundraising Strategies
by Michael Seltzer
New York: The Foundation Center, 1987, 514 pp., $19.95 (paper)

Jill Muehrcke

More and more of an independent producer's time these days seems to be devoted to the quest for money and backers. Part of the trouble, of course, can be traced to cutbacks in federal funding and the scarcity of fiscal sources. But another serious problem can be pinpointed as well—a lack of understanding or a too narrow view of the complex, multi-faceted process of fundraising.

Securing Your Organization's Future should go a long way toward remedying that deficiency. While aimed at nonprofit organizations, the book is applicable to anyone for whom raising money is an ongoing concern. There *are* secrets that can produce long-term effects in that process. This comprehensive guide takes the view which is (thank goodness) becoming increasingly widespread—that sharing such secrets, rather than intensifying a competitive, divisive environment, strengthens us all. Thus, the fundraising tactics presented here are built around successful examples gleaned from Michael Seltzer's 20 years in the fundraising field. The stories of other fundraisers illuminate the concepts Seltzer delineates with such care.

He begins by describing the major tasks which must be addressed before anyone is ready to search for funding in the "marketplace." This focus on becoming "fundraising-ready" before launching a campaign illustrates the attention Seltzer gives to preparedness—a crucial aspect of fundraising often—and disastrously—ignored in the scramble for dollars. One of Seltzer's primary lessons is that you must have a clear understanding of your goals, the importance of your work, and the vision that guides it before you can convince others to invest in your projects. On the other hand, a clear sense of your purpose and how you plan to put it into action increases your ability to enlist funders. Perhaps the most critical lesson to be learned, however, is the importance of obtaining a combination of different funding types. "Diversify!" is Seltzer's exhortation. He compares a successful funding base to a multilegged stool, each leg supplying a different major

source of money. If one leg is removed, the stool may wobble, but it will continue to stand. Woe to those who rely on just one type of funding, whether federal grants, foundations, corporations, or individual donors. No stool can stand on a single leg.

Of course, the trick is to obtain the best mix of funding types in the most appropriate percentages for *your* particular situation. The key can be found in the generous sprinkling of worksheets throughout the book. These exercise pages give you the opportunity to take stock of your assets, weaknesses, and funding history, which you can convert into the most trenchant particulars for your needs. Always adhering to this individualized approach, Seltzer gives specific advice on tapping philanthropic resources, delving into every fundraising strategy from special events and direct mail to planned giving and earned venture income.

The largest section of the book, "Exploring the World of Money," enumerates sources of funding. Seltzer meticulously examines seven key areas of support—individual donors, foundations, businesses and corporations, government, religious institutions, federated fundraising organizations (such as United Way), and associations of individuals (such as the Junior League). Keeping in mind another important lesson—that each source needs to be approached quite differently—he then explains the best methods to use in each case.

Next, he focuses on ways to obtain the best match between you and your funding "partners," for fundraising in its finest sense, Seltzer writes, represents a "collaboration among different parties that are moved to act on the same set of concerns." Just as a bank underwrites a business, so do these funding sources underwrite your expenses. While these partners do not only look for monetary returns, they do want to see the concrete results of your plans. Selecting the perfect financial partners for your projects can be a time-consuming process, and again, Seltzer's worksheets will be invaluable in helping you make the best choices for your unique situation.

After guiding you through these decisions, Seltzer provides a blueprint for designing and implementing a multi-dimensional fundraising program. Once more it should be a program fitted to your individual needs, capitalizing on the particular nature of your work. Step by step, Selzer outlines such crucial phases as making your "case," preparing your fundraising plan and calendar, making the approach, building a relationship with your supporters, and evaluating your efforts. These phases are cyclical and continuous, since effective fundraising means not only securing funds for your immediate work but laying the financial groundwork for future endeavors as well (another vital lesson). Fundraising must always be ongoing, never considered finished.

Details are what give this book such impact and utility. Included are case studies, a list of further readings, even a listing of "grammar hotlines" around the country to help you write persuasive fundraising documents. While Seltzer presents the basics of fundraising in simple, easy to follow steps, he does not minimize the intricacies of the process or the difficulties inherent in securing funds. As he makes clear, these are hard lessons, but we need not learn them by trial and error, at our own expense—not when such powerful secrets are shared.

Jill Muehrcke is the editor of Nonprofit World, *a national journal for nonprofit organizations, put out by the Society for Nonprofit Organizations in Madison, Wisconsin.*

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Reality Check

The Looking Glass World of Nonfiction TV
by Elayne Rapping
Boston: South End Press, 1987, 201 pp., $8.50 (paper)

Martha Gever

It can be tempting, in this era of media hoopla, to take an accommodating view toward network television. Not long ago I too adopted an attitude of resignation while watching a pretentious ad for the services of Shearson Lehman Brothers brokerage firm—they actually said the word "capitalism." Fat chance, I cynically thought, that socialists could successfully argue for equal time. But it's important to remember that TV, in its present form and its potential as a communications device, is hotly contested turf. The problem for those who want to challenge TV's effects, however, is locating the source of its power.

For the networks, with their revolving-door executive suites, the battle is engaged as ratings wars, competition based on demographic audience stats. The marketplace ideology of the broadcasting business itself remains sacrosanct, if tainted by occasional high-minded liberalism. Politicians of all stripes try to master television's claim to authority and its techniques of persuasion, becoming television actors in the process, while accusing television of corrupting politics. Every group hoping to change the reigning social order vies for "coverage" and "positive images," usually with an eye toward the superficiality of the results. Media activists and artists devise and sometimes develop uses of television technology outside the commercial system. Meanwhile, the FCC hacks away at the regulations that shape television as we know it in this country, working to rid broadcasting of anomolies like the Fairness Doctrine and the EEO provisions for station licensing.

Television—the most popular, broadcast, commercial variety—demands attention, certainly from those of us who watch it but also from those who are frustrated by it. More, television acts as a common denominator of contemporary conciousness—how we collectively interpret reality. In *The Looking Glass World of Nonfiction TV* Elayne Rapping recognizes that an economic analysis of television's overt collusion with capitalism is inadequate to explain its popular appeal. Instead, she maintains, it serves various social functions, not all of which favor the powerful. And, Rapping contends, the manifold contradictions found in television programs can be usefully examined, especially in instances where fiction and fact-based materials combine to create televised "reality."

Much of the television schedule that Rapping peruses is the stuff most serious critics never consider: game shows, daytime and nighttime talk shows, magazine-format shows, "real people" shows (e.g., *Divorce Court*), and biography-based mini-series, to name a few. But in her view the prototype for most of these TV staples is the good-natured, good-neighborly local news. In the carefully staged, informal atmosphere of the local newsroom, populated with attractive anchorpeople, weather and sports reporters, Rapping situates the surrogate family and community that television offers in place of the ones absent elsewhere. This, she writes, is her central argument:

> That this society needs to manufacture a synthetic version of community in this way is a reflection of its structural values, not its citizens. It is the economic drive of capitalism, after all, that subverted the homogenous communities of the past.... [I]f people enjoy and look forward to watching this stuff it is not because they are stupid; it is because their immediate human needs are not being met elsewhere.

She then examines other program types, looking for exceptions as well as conformity to the rules of capitalist hegemony. In the process, what passes for "real" is described as a mediation between the profit motives of

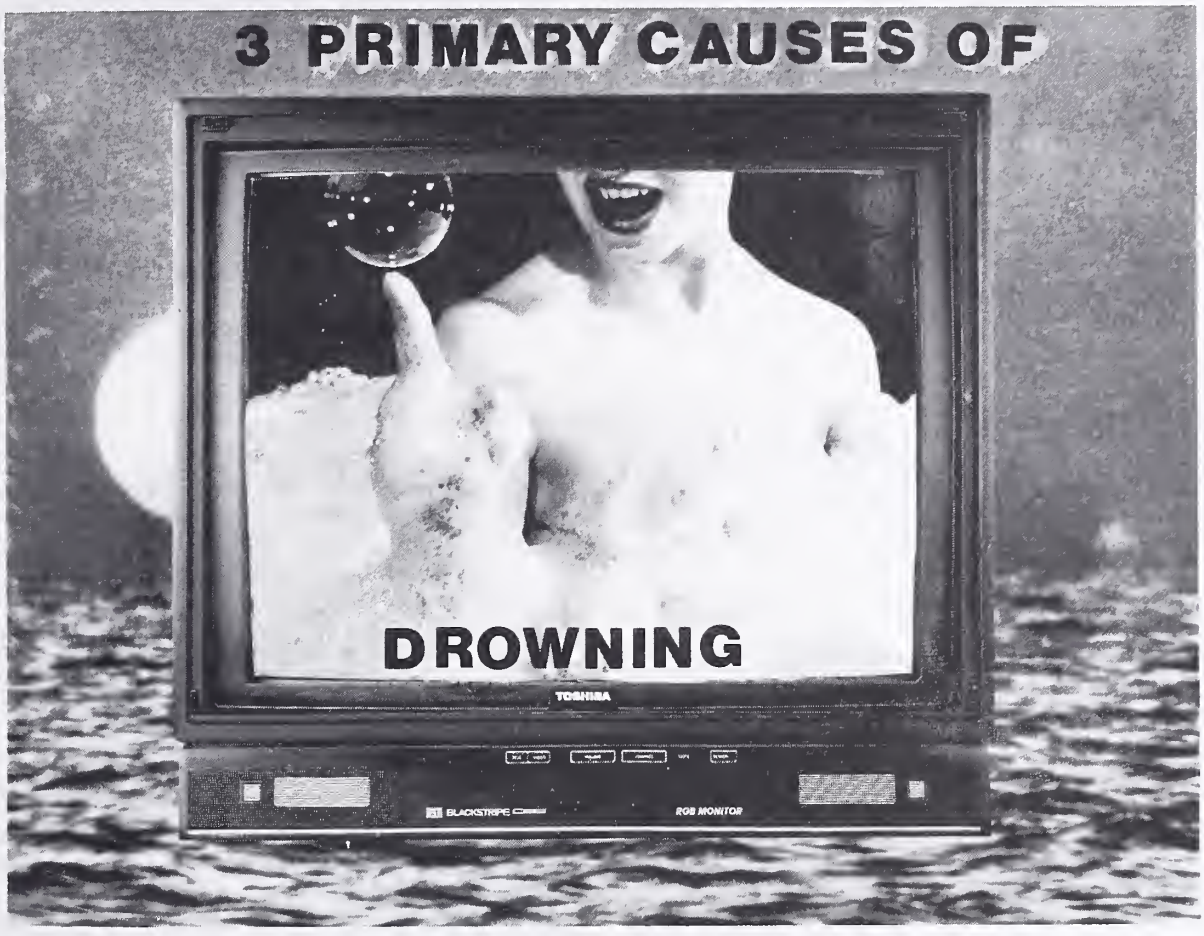


Illustration: Sherry Millner

the television industry and what Rapping attributes to less crass social impulses.

Having set her sights on network television, Rapping unfortunately accepts many of its conditions at the same time as she conducts her dissection of a number of its standard techniques. Her persistent attempt to dispute commercial television's triumph over all adversaries of capitalist ideology by asserting the active participation of its viewers in creating meaning is undercut by her tribute to television's almost absolute authority. "It is there; it molds and shapes; it is the voice and soul of our informing values and social determinants," she ventures in the introduction. And again, in the section on special documentary programs, she holds that the ideology that informs portrayals of hideous political events, like impending nuclear war, as inevitable tragedy is "programmed into our brains."

Whatever possibilities for alternative or "progressive" meaning she finds in network fare are effectively neutralized by this unproblematic surrender to the basic premise of mass broadcasting media—that it holds "the masses" in its thrall. Or she is led to measuring progress in terms of documentaries on nuclear weapons or the appearance of professional women in soap operas. But, she reveals, any actual opportunities for alternative content must be credited to the rare concerned and committed, though necessarily restricted producer or the brave talk show guest who breaks taboos once and thus forfeits future invitations. Or we can tune to MTV, and see video clips with an "implicit and at times explicit social and political attitude." The examples cited here are the music videos of Madonna and Cyndi Lauper "...that are boldly and independently sexual on their own terms, terms which often reflect working class attitudes towards middle class hypocrisy, not only in matters of money and female sexuality, but generally." In this case and others, Rapping identifies fascinating contradictions but overlooks the contradictions in the very cultural products she finds promising. How independent from traditional, patriarchal, restrictive idealizations of femininity are Lauper and Madonna? And is the celebration of commodities in *Material Girl* that far removed from Shearson Lehman's ad for capitalism?

The techniques used by successful TV advertisements to tap consumer fantasies and those employed in rock videos are practically indistinguishable. Flashy and stylish as these may be, they hardly allow critical consciousness. In her chapter on commercials, synthesizing and updating various studies of advertising, Rapping observes the pace-setting role played by commercial design. "[F]orm itself, rather than mere content, communicates meaning," she aptly points out. Whereas in this chapter she acknowledges the workings of formal organization of images and sound in building an ideological effect, this crucial analytic method is abandoned when she fixes on other program types. "The kernel of beauty and truth in a cultural work," she contends, "can be separated from its contradictory elements and understood for what it is. But cultural analysis is one thing; political reality another." Hazzy invocations of truth and beauty neatly dismiss the question of how aesthetic choices suit political purposes. She returns to this separation again when she brushes aside an important feature of made-for-TV movies, such as *The Burning Bed* or *The Day After*, where social problems are presented as personalized, domestic melodrama. This she believes, is "dictated by the form itself." What about ideology? The only *formal* requirement of a two-hour made-for-TV movie is length, and one can conceive of televised talk or games, for that matter, that at once entertain and defy the formats devised for network TV.

By cataloguing the variants of nonfiction television, Rapping sketches a

method for mapping television's territory, but her text could do with fewer rambling, repetitious descriptions and with more carefully argued theoretical propositions. Her starting point—that opposition to unthinking appreciation of television's offerings need not resort to cynicism, condescension, or nostalgia—raises important questions about the relationship between viewers and the programs they watch. But, like the mirror belonging to Snow White's wicked step-mother, the TV looking glass that Rapping consults doesn't always tell the truth. If the distortions produced by reflections in the television screen are used to extrapolate "reality"—as they are in this book—opposition, and social consciousness in general, can only reproduce what's on TV. That assumption blithely confirms one of the major sources of television's authority. Without looking through the lies or half-truths perpetuated by the TV industry, the ideological power it exercises remains undisturbed.

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To Market, To Market

American Film Distribution: The Changing Marketplace
by Suzanne Mary Donahue
Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987, 385 pp., $49.95 (cloth)

Nancy Gerstman

A few months ago, I spoke with a colleague about how people usually think my job as a film distributor is tedious and boring, riddled with burdensome paperwork. We decided that someone should write a book on film distribution—for us, a subject that is mysterious and exciting. Still, we abandoned the project after realizing a number of problems that it would invite. Who would read this book? How could people understand the symbiotic, suspicious relationship between producers, distributors, and exhibitors? And, most important, in a game where the rules are always changing and there's a constantly shifting cast of new players, aren't there too many variables?

Another writer has proved less wary of these nagging dilemmas. Suzanne Mary Donahue's formidable research has produced *American Film Distribution: The Changing Marketplace*, which tries to demystify and explain this complex area of the film business. Donahue understands that one of the complications endemic to film distribution is that it is joined at the hip to both production and exhibition. She states that "though they cannot survive without one another, they are suspicious of the control the other possesses." And this mutual mistrust, which gives an added buzz to the business, is the foundation on which Donahue's book rests.

The longing for movies that rapidly intensified at the start of this century created a demand that swelled the number of theaters—in New York the number grew from 50 in 1900 to more than 400 in 1908. In 1909, approximately 6,000 nickelodeons were in operation nationwide, and by 1910 there were 20,000. Movies very abruptly became a competitive and extremely cut-throat business. Exchanges, groups that purchased films from producers and rented them to exhibitors on a weekly basis, became dependent upon the Trust, an all-powerful group formed by Thomas Edison consisting of nine major producers. Those who were not included in the Trust set up their own production companies, and since regular exchanges would only take Trust product, independent film and independent exhibitions were born.

Donahue reveals facts that might very well prove fascinating to those interested in either distribution history or esoterica. She recounts how the competition for Mary Pickford's films introduced the process called block-booking—whereby exhibitors must take several mediocre films from a studio to get ones they really want. She tells how the divestment of theaters by the major studios in the late 1940s completely changed the shape of distribution and how the decrease in the number of films produced after that divestment profoundly affected exhibition.

While maintaining a historical perspective throughout, Donahue's primary focus is today's marketplace. She includes chapters on film financing and distribution, festivals, foreign and ancillary markets, and a particularly detailed chapter on the aforementioned complexities of the distributor-exhibitor relationship. There are individual chapters on the major distributors, limited market distributors, and independents. The sales histories of a number of films, including *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, make informative reading. Although most of this information is not particularly useful to the independent producer working within a very low budget, there is some appropriate advice about ancillary markets, pre-planning, and publicity budgets. She also lays out the options available to an independent filmmaker who wishes to avoid involvement with a major distributor.

Unfortunately, the book contains serious flaws that temper an enthusiastic recommendation. Although Donahue covers an impressive amount of ground, her writing is dry and utilitarian. Her book lacks the colorful prose and humor of *The Movie Business Book*, which imparts much of the same information in colloquial, readable language. And with more careful editing we could have been spared the tediousness of inaccurate tenses and numerous misspellings. Also, some of her conclusions are incoherent or irrelevant. In one confounding paragraph, for instance, she both discourages and encourages the use of TV ads for films. At times Donahue is maddeningly unwilling to follow-up with practical information. In a chapter on censorship, for example, she doesn't say what the consequences are for a film without a rating. And, when quoting an HBO executive claiming that they pay for a film based on the theatrical rental earned, we aren't told their formula for this arrangement. This is important information for a filmmaker or distributor.

Other petty, but irritating mistakes abound. *Diva* was distributed by United Artists Classics, not Orion Classics, and a misspelled version of Vincente Minnelli's name appears on a list of producers and directors who became famous working at AIP (American International Pictures). In spite of her apparently thorough research, Dolby sound is not mentioned in the section on technology. There is no mention of black theater ownership and distribution in the 1920s, including the distribution network of the great filmmaker Oscar Micheaux.

Perhaps the most significant problem with the book, however, is that it was originally written as a doctoral dissertation in 1984. Although the copyright page indicates that the text was revised in 1985 and 1987, there is very little evidence of updating. The section on festivals especially suffers from obsolescence. Distribution, and independent distribution in particular, has changed enormously in the last three years, and the book only minimally reflects the notable incursions of independents into the mainstream in 1987. Many of the new important distribution companies for independent work, like Cinecom, Circle Releasing, SpectraFilm, and Skouras, are barely mentioned, if at all. Information on Island Pictures and the Samuel Goldwyn Company is out of date. Recently, in *Newsweek*, an executive at Skouras stated that "in 1985 there were five independently-produced films that did

more than $1 million in domestic film rentals—in 1986 there were nearly 20." And independents accounted for 35 of the major Academy Award nominations this year—only one "studio-financed" film was nominated for Best Picture. For a book subtitled *The Changing Marketplace*, the marketplace changes far too profoundly too fast for a 1987 audience to be dependent on 1984 information.

Nancy Gerstman is director of theatrical sales for First Run Features, a distribution company.

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Critical Mass

Studies in Entertainment: Critical Approaches to Mass Culture
edited by Tania Modleski
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986, 210 pp., $8.95 (paper)

Abigail Solomon-Godeau

Towards the end of Dana Polan's essay "Brief Encounters"—one of the many thoughtful and provocative essays in *Studies in Entertainment* —he is led to speculate about an aspect of popular culture that defies any conventional theory: "Even though this may seem the vaguest, most non-analyzable of terms I would say that there is a fundamental weirdness in contemporary mass culture that we need to confront and theorize." Polan's willingness to engage with the decidedly unacademic notion of weirdness (introduced in his discussion of thematic incoherence in mass media products like *Mork and Mindy* and *The Blues Brothers*) reflects one of the central strengths of this book: an approach to mass culture that avoids either the patrician dismissal of Frankfurt School descendants, who view it as irredeemably pernicious, or the delirious false populism of its various celebrants, who view it as liberating and empowering—"the politics of fun," as one zealot has it. Neither demonizing nor valorizing, the essays assembled in *Studies* grant complexity and contradiction to mass culture, while interrogating its objects from positions that—explicitly or implicitly—derive from the left and from feminism.

Tania Modleski's lucid and eloquent introduction maps out the traditional parameters that have, for the most part, defined the mass culture debate and culminated in the mutually unsatisfactory polarities of condemnation or embrace. For German theorists such as Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse, who effectively invented the field of mass cultural studies, the seductions and blandishments of radio, film, and popular music were approached as ideological depredations of capital—forms of cultural colonization that foster acceptance of existing social and productive relations, or the status quo. They argued that the standardization, instrumentalism, and commodity fetishism of modern capitalism were virtually duplicated in the production of mass cultural artifacts. In Adorno's profoundly influential formulation, the value of high art was seen to reside in its capacity to resist instrumental uses, as it embodied both utopian values and cultural critiques exiled from the sphere of mass culture. Following from this dichotomy, mass culture was perceived as the successor to religion as the opiate of the masses, but devoid of religion's utopian aspect.

Such ideas do not speak well of the masses. Duped, if not wholly lobotomized, by the ersatz pleasures of Hollywood and Tin Pan Alley, the masses were conceived as wholly passive recipients of the bad medicine dispensed from above. Modleski identifies the first important modification of this position in Hans Magnus Enzensberger's 1970 essay "Constituents of a Theory of the Media." Breaking with what had by then become a tenet of the left, Enzenberger argued that, far from imposing false needs and false consciousness upon the masses, the success of mass culture indicated that it responds to real needs and desires. The problem, therefore, lay in the distortions, the manipulations, or the false resolutions that the culture industry imposed. This critical tack, although not without its own problems, has turned out to be extremely productive, evidenced in work such as Modelski's 1982 book, *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women.*

The Adorno model of mass culture (specifically, his analysis of pop music) need not, however, be rejected out of hand. Included in *Studies* is an essay by Bernard Gendron, entitled "Theodor Adorno meets the Cadillacs," which reconsiders Adorno's 1941 notorious diatribe *On Modern Music.* Gendron understands, as do all the book's contributors (as did Adorno himself), that the phenomenon of mass culture should not be confused with any notion of popular culture. Popular culture, we might say, springs from the people, while mass culture is administered to them, notwithstanding its borrowings, derivations, or cannibalizations from authentically popular sources. This is a particularly important distinction to make in discussions of rock, where claims for its empowering or transgressive potential are frequently made. Focusing on Adorno's conceptions of pseudo-individualization and interchangeability as the hallmarks of Tin Pan Alley, Gendron persuasively demonstrates the utility of these concepts for an analysis of contemporary rock 'n' roll. Gendron's essay indicates that it is possible to adopt a critical stance without dismissing a cultural form outright and reminds us of the still-valid elements of Adorno's project.

In tracing the Frankfurt School legacy and the more recent apologies for mass culture, Modleski augments her consideration with the crucial recognition that both attitudes depend upon the conceptualization of mass culture as the underside and opposite of high art and culture. It is precisely this attribution of "otherness" to mass cultural forms that emerges as one of the key themes in the book, suggesting some of the terms for a feminist analysis of mass culture. One of the most far-reaching insights sparked by the inquiry into mass culture's "otherness" turns on the recognition that mass culture and its audience are frequently taken as feminine. In a sociological or demographic sense, such gender association may be empirically justified, in so far as the bulk of particular consumer groups consist of women—the entire schedule of daytime television, for example, is predicated on this assumption. Or, historically, certain genres—e.g., the novel—are associated with women. Perhaps most importantly, however, the debased status of mass culture in general has been conflated with the debased status of what are considered feminine traits. Modleski and many of her contributors are able to unpack the sexist bias underpinning this construction.

In this regard, Andreas Huyssen's excellent essay, "Mass Culture as Woman," is especially illuminating, demonstrating that, from Flaubert to Trilling to Baudrillard, the feminization of both mass culture and the masses has been a constant and pervasive motif. As Modleski argues in her introduction—and as many of the essays confirm—it is from the vantage point of feminism that the most compelling and persuasive examinations of mass cultural forms derive. She writes, "Feminists in particular have good reason to resist adversary aesthetics since women have often been identified



Illustration: Sherry Millner

with the specious good, with pleasure, and with mass culture itself." Modleski's contribution, "The Terror of Pleasure: The Contemporary Horror Film and Postmodern Theory," takes as one of its themes the denegration and concomitant feminization of the notion of pleasure in both modernist and postmodernist theory.

One of the strengths of these feminist perspectives on mass culture is that they reveal the interworkings of patriarchal and capitalist ideologies. Judith Williamson's "Woman Is an Island: Femininity and Colonization," a trenchant and witty reading of advertisments trading on the concept of the exotic, is a good case in point. Williamson proceeds from the observation that we inhabit a society that rigidly divides the realms of the (masculine) public sphere and the (feminine) private one. The association between mass culture and leisure time, the home, and "the personal" overlap with the space designated "feminine"—a colony within the larger society. And the colonization of femininity parallels, may absorb, or may represent other forms of colonization. Williamson goes on to argue that the ideological move that constitutes woman/nature/exoticism serves a specific cultural function within capitalism, creating fantasies of difference while eradicating all authentic ones: "Living in liberal democracies, we are accustomed to 'difference' appearing as a form of validation—whether in the form of 'balance'...or in the form of 'choice'.... The whole drive of our society is toward displaying as much difference as possible within it while eliminating where at all possible what is different from it.... And those differences represented within, which our culture so liberally offers, are to a great extent reconstructions of captured external differences."

In addition to raising issues such as these, feminist interpretations of the relationships of women to mass media provide a useful corrective to monolithic concepts of mass culture. If we grant that women's position in patriarchal societies is problematic, frought with contradictions, then we can better understand the sometimes contradictory—hardly seamless—meanings mass culture produces. An especially good example of this kind of analysis is provided by Patricia Mellencamp's "Situation Comedy, Feminism, and Freud: Discourses of Gracie and Lucy." Mellencamp's paper is based on an analysis of 40 episodes of *The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show*, which debuted in 1950 and was discontinued in 1958, and 170 episodes of *I Love Lucy*, aired from 1951 to 1957. Both programs thus appeared at the historical moment when American women were being induced and economically squeezed out of paid labor and into unpaid positions as homemakers, while the comic character of both Gracie and Lucy relied on their respective disturbances of such arrangements. In Gracie's case, this was primarily effected through language and logic: "[S]erving coffee but not sense, Gracie equivocally escaped order. Despite being burdened by all the clichés applied to women—illogical, crazy, nonsensical, possessing their own peculiar bio-logic and patronized accordingly—in certain ways she seemed to be out of (or beyond) men's control." The comic structure of *I Love Lucy* revolved around Lucy's perpetually foiled attempts to become a performer, in defiance of her husband's insistence that she remain at home. Mellencamp factors in the particular paradox of Lucy—the gifted, professional zany—playing Lucy—the housewife who constantly fails to become a professional performer—into the more profound paradoxes of female subjects in comedy. Drawing on Freud's *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*, Mellencamp explores the difficulties of women's "place" in a comedic economy: the double bind incorporated by women such as Lucy and Gracie—and their female audience—when they function as both subject and object.

That George invariably had the last word on each show and that each week Lucy was returned to domesticity is obviously as significant as Gracie and Lucy's manic disruptions. And Mellencamp makes a distinction between the greater "authority" accorded to George and Desi (the real-life husbands of the stars). Mellencamp suggests that Lucy's upstagings and defiance of Desi were permissible because of implicit racism that relegated the Ricky Ricardo character to an inferior position. But the crucial point here is the eventual return to "normalcy" that typically prevails. Does it profit left feminist critics to ingeniously excavate the latent—or even manifest—protest or utopian aspirations when we ultimately lose the game?

Few of the essays in the book are prepared to hazard concrete suggestions for effective opposition. Certainly, part of the problem lies in the nature of mass culture—a massive, more or less centralized array of industries hardly vulnerable to intellectual guerrilla warfare. Where an actual practice is proposed, the results can be embarassing. For instance, in Kaja Silverman's "Fragments of a Fashionable Discourse" the strength of the essay lies wholly in its analytic insights and its weakness in the inadequacy of its prescription. Drawing upon the insights of J.C. Flugel's classic study of 1930, *The Psychology of Clothes*, Silverman examines the implications of what Flugel termed "The Great Masculine Renunciation"—the wholesale abandonment by eighteenth century men of elaborate costume and finery that resulted in three displacements: "1) sublimation into professional 'showing off'; 2) reversal into scopophilia; and 3) male identification with woman-as-spectacle." Silverman considers the historical vicissitudes of this phenomenon claiming that in the modern era, sartorial distinctions based on class have softened and those based on gender have hardened. At this point, Silverman calls for an actual practice —a form of dressing which would foreground the historical construction of fashion—the mode of "retro" thrift store dressing, linking this to the even more dubious project of postmodernist architectural pastiche.

That a rigorously intelligent exposition can terminate in such an intellec-

tually and practically inadequate "solution" indicates the difficulty of moving from critique to transformation. Unquestionably, the great strength of *Studies in Entertainment* lies in its range of nuanced and careful analyses, whether of such largely unremarked phenomena as television sound in Rick Altman's "Television/Sound" (which is, additionally, a critique of Raymond Williams' famous formulation of television "flow") or Jean Franco's discussion of U.S. and Mexican popular romances. Critical work such as this, exemplified by the book as a whole, surely needs no justification and requires no special pleading. If the rare prescription founders or if the essayists function better as diagnosticians than tacticians, this has more to do with the relative political impotence of the left/feminist intelligentsia than with any individual limitations.

We might, however, take Polan's observations on "weirdness" as a fitful glimmer of possibility. In his thoughtful examination of theorists like Barthes, Jameson, and Greimas, and his ruminations on mass cultural products such as a single *Blondie* comic strip, Polan returns to aspects of mass culture that evidence incoherence, contradiction, a pervasive non-meaning where dominant ideologies perhaps fail. The space he thus opens—the space of weirdness—could be likened to the unconscious of mass culture. And if we accept that disturbances in the unconscious indicate failures of mastery and control, perhaps these weirdnesses in the products of the consciousness industry bespeak its failure to contain all dissent. In keeping with the insights of feminist theory, the analyses of mass culture in *Studies in Entertainment* reminds us that there are chinks in the armor, and resistances to domination.

Abigail Solomon-Godeau is a photography historian and critic living in New York City.

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Star Gazing

Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society
by Richard Dyer
New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986, 208 pp., $29.95 (cloth), $11.95 (paper)

Katherine Dieckmann

Richard Dyer is one of a particular breed in film studies: a highly academic writer mesmerized by popular culture. Dyer has spent roughly the last decade turning out theoretical works on movie stars, first in *Stars*, then in the method and analysis book, *The Stars*, in a debate collection called *Star Signs*, and finally now in *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society*—all evidence of Dyer's desire to combine high and low—semiotics and glitz—by looking at the way stars "function as media texts." The project isn't necessarily simple-minded, but what Dyer ends up doing is preaching to the converted. Presumably, most readers of *People* and quickie celebrity bios aren't going to bother to follow Dyer's speculative journey, and those readers already familiar with more substantial writing on film won't be at all surprised by what Dyer says and does. The idea that stars are commodities, vehicles for profit, isn't such a radical one, yet Dyer lays forth this observation, and many others, with all the pride of revelation.

Heavenly Bodies focuses on three stars and their construction in the societies of their time: Marilyn Monroe, Paul Robeson, and Judy Garland. The Monroe chapter is the least involving, despite Marilyn's megastar appeal. So much has already been written. Do we really need to be told that Monroe can be read through the dominant ideas of female sexuality in the fifties (which Dyer somewhat hyperbolically sets outs as "formless" and as a "psycho discourse of vaginal orgasm")? Or that Judy Garland appeals to gay men because of her "emotionality," "androgny," "ordinariness," and "camp" qualities?

While Dyer has some interesting observations in both the Monroe and Garland chapters—remarking on Monroe's unashamed response to her "Golden Dreams" *Playboy* spread, a comment that reflects on more recent efforts by porn magazines to sully supposedly untainted reputations, his view of Garland's impact on homosexual men as a product of her 1950s suicide attempt, which recast her wholeness image—mostly he overstates his main points over and over again. At times he's even wildly erroneous, as when he claims titillating "art photography" is called that because "it was ostensibly sold to artists, whose responses to naked women were supposedly less coarse than other men's."

Dyer's chapter on Paul Robeson and images of black men in mass culture is far more illuminating, partly because less has been written on the topic, especially by a white critic. Dyer examines the period between 1924-45, when Robeson was at the height of his stardom (and was less politically vocal than in the fifties). Tracing Robeson's work through ideas of black "vitality" (versus white repressiveness), the idea of blackness as intrinsically "folk," and questions of atavism (ideas of the black man as "brute" or "beast," the question of Africa), Dyer provides intriguing readings of Robeson's film work and his import as iconographic presence in mass American culture. There's less cant and more contemplation here, making the chapter a redeeming passage in an otherwise unspectacular study.

Katherine Dieckmann is a freelance writer living in New York.

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PARIS CALLING: CINEMA DU REEL



Todd Coleman is the subject of Tina DiFeliciantonio's documentary *Living with AIDS*, one of the U.S. documentaries at the 1987 Cinéma du Réel in Paris.

Courtesy filmmaker

Jonathan Stack

The first time I took a trip abroad a friend made me promise I'd never write a travel book. To honour this long-standing commitment (as well as for simplicity's sake), I won't describe the many attractions of Paris. Needless to say, everyone at the 1987 Cinéma du Réel festival agreed that—no matter what happened—they didn't regret the trip.

This was the Cinéma du Réel's ninth year and, with 88 films and videotapes from 26 countries (selected from over 500 entrants), it was once again demonstrated that this is perhaps the most international of all documentary festivals. The event is held at the Centre Georges Pompidou—more commonly called the Beaubourg—a strange and controversial building that is one of the most exciting spaces in Paris. Unfortunately, this does not necessarily work to the advantage of the festival. There is no permanent gathering place, and the crowds (the majority aren't at the Beaubourg for the festival) are enormous. According to Manfred Kirchheimer (*We Were So Beloved*), the only U.S. director present, "I don't blame the festival, but the building just doesn't allow for a feeling of intimacy." So, despite a very friendly and helpful staff, it's a difficult place to meet people. Second, as one of France's major cultural institutions, the Centre Pompidou received two bomb threats during the festival, and a routine check was instituted for everyone entering the building. The tension added to the excitement but caused additional stress for the festival staff.

Marie Christine de Navacelle, Cinéma du Réel's director, mentioned that, after taking into account the invited guests (all press, filmmakers, and film professionals were offered a pass for the whole week), there are barely any seats left for the public, particularly for screenings highlighted in the local media. But, in spite of the rather narrow audience this creates and the relative scarcity of buyers or distributors present, there are many advantages for filmmakers whose work is included. William Sloane of the Museum of Modern Art, the official U.S. correspondent for the festival, enumerated these quite clearly: "This is the only important documentary festival in Paris and the best entry into France." Furthermore, the catalogue is beautifully produced and serves as a extremely useful tool for promotion. The prestigious jury and organizing committee provide possible links to other festivals and perhaps future sales. The Bibliothèque Publique d'Information, the organizer of the festival, often buys a copy of the films screened. They buy a print at lab cost, subtitle it, and pay the filmmaker 80 percent of rental proceeds. For an additional sum, they buy nonexclusive rights to distribute videocassette copies throughout the French national public library system. Of course, receiving a prize—first prize for feature-length films is 20,000 francs (approximately $4,700) and 5,000 for shorts ($800)—is an additional, welcomed benefit. The quality of the Beaubourg's screening facilities is very good, and the simultaneous translation with headphones (in French) is also fine, but obviously irrelevant for non-French speakers.

In the past and at the 1987 event, not all films were invited to compete and the criteria for participation seemed somewhat arbitrary. Although titled a "Film Festival of Visual Anthropology and Social Documentation," the vast majority of the films at Cinéma du Réel would be better categorized as political documentaries. Many that would generally be labeled "anthropological" are forwarded to Jean Rouche's Bilan du Cinema Etnographique, which begins immediately following the conclusion of Cinéma du Réel.

But next year the organization of Cinéma du Réel will change drastically. They're planning to show only 10 to 12 feature-length documentaries, interspersed with an equal number of shorts. Navacelle explained, "There is no need to include such a large number of films. As a public institution, our first responsibility is to the general public, and our audience would be better served by showing fewer films and repeating them at least two times. If we were going to service the film professionals, the Beaubourg, because of its layout and crowds, would not be the best place to hold such an event. A big plus for the filmmakers is that by having fewer films, we'll be able to help them get more media attention." Another positive aspect of this change is that, in the future, all the films will be considered in the competition. The selection process will also change. Program choices will be made based on recommendations from a network of international correspondents, rather than from submissions. In the U.S., Sloane will be the festival's contact. Every year the program will be built around a theme. In honor of the European Year of Film, the focus in 1988 will be European films and subject matter.

We'll have our turn in the future, but 1988 isn't likely to be a good year for U.S. documentary film- and videomakers at Cinéma du Réel. In light of already reduced opportunities for exhibiting documentary work, this is a disappointment.

Jonathan Stack is a coprogrammer of the Margaret Mead Film Festival at the American Museum of Natural History.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. **Listings do not constitute an endorsement** & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL VIDEO FESTIVAL, January, New York. Asian CineVision, one of the largest Asian-American media arts centers in the US, sponsors this annual celebration of new videoworks by videographers of Asian heritage, focusing on the wide range of aesthetic, political & personal concerns. Last yr's fest featured 31 Asian & Asian-American experimental, doc, narrative, installation & performance pieces. 3/4" NTSC only (preview tapes may be any format; work must have originated in video). Entries must have been produced &/or directed by Asian or Asian-American videomakers. No entry fee; fest pays return shipping & insurance. Deadline: Oct. 30. Contact: Marlina Gonzalez, Asian CineVision, 32 E. Broadway, 4th fl., New York, NY 10002; (212) 925-8685.

BUCKS COUNTY FILM FESTIVAL/INDEPENDENT FILM COMPETITION, November, Pennsylvania. Competitive fest & touring showcase for short ind. films under 30 mins., sponsored by Film Five, a nonprofit filmmaker's collaborative & film society Closely Watched Films. Cash prizes totalling $2,000 given in cats of best of fest, art/experimental, narrative, animation & doc. After competition, winning films tour primarily PA venues until early May, w/ rental fees paid to filmmakers. Judges this yr: Robin Dickie, Collective for Living Cinema; John Hanhardt, film & video curator, Whitney Museum & Brady Lewis, Pittsburgh Filmmakers. Films must have been completed after Jan. '85. Entry fee: $20. Format: 16mm. Deadline: Oct. 1. Contact: John Toner, Bucks County Film Festival, c/o Smith & Toner, 8 E. Court St., Doylestown, PA 18901; (215) 348-3566/345-5663 (eves).

CHICAGO LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 25-Oct. 1, Illinois. Held at the Music Box Theatre. Format: super 8, 16mm, 35mm & tapes in all formats. Deadline: August 15. Contact: Chicago Filmmakers, 6 West Hubbard St, Chicago, IL, 60610; (312) 329-0854.

EL PASO/JUAREZ INTERNATIONAL FILM AND CULTURE FESTIVAL, Oct. 9-11, Texas. First-time Southwestern showcase hopes to draw large multicultural audiences from northern & southern Mexico and West Texas, featuring artistic & humanitarian films & videos from US, Europe & Latin America on fest theme "Entering the Pass of the North Through Film Art." Accepts features, shorts, docs & videos. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Patricia Roybal Sutton, El Paso/Juarez International Film & Culture Festival, 3125 Rivera, El Paso, TX 79903; (915) 562-0225.

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EDITING



Rikki Rauhala, an exchange student from Finland, gets a taste of California suburbia in *All American High*, Keva Rosenfeld and Linda Maron's documentary screened at Cinéma du Réel.

Courtesy Direct Cinema

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, November, Wisconsin. Open to film & videomakers in OH, IL, IA, MN, IN, MI & WI; sponsored by Univ. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Dept. of Film, for 11th yr. Last yr's judges: John Hanson of New Front Films, cinematographer Babette Mangolte & videomaker Skip Blumberg. Any ind., noncommercial work may compete in cats of animation, doc, experimental & narrative; cash prizes awarded. Entry fee: $15. Format: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Sept. 19. Contact: Michele Lien, Great Lakes Film & Video Festival, UWM Dept. of Film, Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201; (414) 963-7714.

GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 21-28, Florida. Debuting last year, this noncompetitive fest hopes to grow into a consistently friendly regional environment for best of new US ind. feature films, incl. new, unknown & innovative work. Last yr's fest showcased 36 independent films. Seminar on "The Rise of American Independents/The Decline of Hollywood?" & sidebar of children's films rounded out program. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Oct. 1. Contact: Patty Lombard, board pres./chair of film selection committee, 201 E. 69th St., #4B, New York, NY 10021; (212) 472-0870. Fest address: 19 NE Third St., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301; (305) 764-7001.

ONION CITY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 30-31, Illinois. Sponsored by Experimental Film Coalition, this fest showcases all types of experimental films, up to 40 min. long. This is 4th yr of fest, to be held at the Noyes Cultural Ctr. in Evanston & judged by San Francisco experimental filmmaker Gunvor Nelson & film historian/theorist Fred Camper. About 30 films selected. Experimental Film Coalition is a membership org. of about 200 filmmakers, which publishes a quarterly newsletter, holds monthly screenings & occasionally has int'l exchanges (this yr, w/ Frankfurt). $2,000 in prizes. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 8mm. Deadline: Oct. 15. Contact: Dennis Couzin, Experimental Film Coalition, 927 Noyes St., Evanston, IL 60201; (312) 869-7664.

PRIZED PIECES FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 14-17, Ohio. Since 1981, National Black Programming Consortium has presented this competition & fest to recognize television & film productions of quality relating to the int'l black experience that "affirmatively represent African-Americans in primary roles." An award & $600 prize presented to producer/licensor of winners in cats of public affairs, cultural affairs, childrens/teens, drama, doc, innovative & comedy. $1,000 award presented to "best black independent production." Stated criteria for awards incl. program's importance to people's lives, creative use of production techniques/skills & clarity & originality of program content, creative development of theme, performances & aesthetic appeal. Work should be of broadcast standard & produced for broadcast, exhibited or aired in the yr prior to fest. NBPC reserves right to screen entries once during fest either in a local public exhibition or on a local cable station, as well as one-time rights for the fest awards ceremony. NBPC is a clearinghouse for black-oriented programming from throughout the world. Entry fees: $35 noncommercial, $60 commercial. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Oct. 5. Contact: Jacqueline Tshaka, NBPC Prized Pieces, 929 Harrison Ave., Suite 104, Columbus, OH 43215; (614) 299-5355.

SAN ANTONIO CINEFESTIVAL, Nov. 6-15, Texas. Any film or video w/ direct relevance to nat'l/int'l Latino community welcomed in 12th yr of this competitive fest. All entries screened & Premio Mesquite awards go to best works in cats of fiction, nonfiction, 1st film/video; several honorable mentions also awarded. Fest is also forum for public discussion; this yr one focus will be social responsibility & creative process. Wkshps by actors/directors held in conjunction w/ Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Science. Held at Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, w/ Plaza Guadalupe as outdoor venue. Format: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 8mm, 3/4". Entry fee: $15. Deadline: Sept. 14. Contact: Eduardo Diaz, director, San Antonio Cinefestival, Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, 1300 Guadalupe St., San Antonio, TX 78207; (512) 271-9070.

THOMAS A. EDISON BLACK MARIA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, December, New Jersey. An "eclectic" 7 yr-old fest which, while traditionally strong in doc & avant-garde work, welcomes entries in any style, genre, or synthesis of cats, as long as work represents a "creative & literate" use of film or video. 4 grand prizes of $750-1,000 & 10 honorable mentions of $250 go to winning films & videos, which this yr will be judged by a panel consisting of Whitney Museum Film Program assoc. director Lucinda Furlong, Neighborhood Film Project director Linda Blackaby, WNET's Independent Focus assoc. producer Faith Kiermaier, independent filmmaker Pat Snyder (a fest winner last yr) & San Francisco Cinematheque program director Steve Anker. Films go to jury after a group of 6 preselectors screens the approximately 350 entries received yearly; about 40 films & videos go on to the fest screening & showcase tour

covering several venues in locations including NJ, NY, DC, VA, PA, OH, IL, RI, CT & Canada. A fest finale is held in April at the Thomas A. Edison National Historic Site in West Orange, NJ. Royalties & fees totalling $5,000 distributed among exhibited works. Fest pays return shipping. Format: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", super 8. Entry fee: $16. Deadline: Oct. 31. Contact: John Columbus, director, Thomas A. Edison Black Maria Film & Video Festival, Thomas A. Edison National Historic Site, Main St. & Lakeside Ave., West Orange, NJ, 07052; (201) 736-0796. Films & tapes sent to Essex Hudson Film Center, East Orange Public Library, 21 S. Arlington Ave., East Orange, NJ 07018, Attn: Ben Harrison.

VIDEOSHORTS FESTIVAL, October, Washington. Devoted solely to short, noncommercial video art, this fest seeks to discover trends in video productions, recognize excellence in video artistry & technique & create archive of 10 best short videos submitted. Entries may be up to 6 minutes; winners receive $100 honorarium after work is judged before live audience & winning videos participate in fest program in Nov. Works distributed on composite tape for use by schools, libraries & media centers; profits go to the artists. Format: 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Entry fee: $10/tape, $5 ea. add'l entry on same tape. Deadline: Oct. 15. Contact: Parker Lindner, Videoshorts Festival, 932 12th Ave., Seattle, WA 98122; (206) 322-9010.

VIDEO REFUSES, Oct 2-10, San Francisco. Artist-run & artist-supported alternative 2 yr-old video fest for "innovative, undiscovered, even unacceptable" works by artists of all types. Format, 3/4", 1/2", Beta, 8mm. For installations, send written 1-2 pp. proposal w/ bio & examples of previous work. Deadline: Sept. 5. Contact: Video Refusés, Box 11308, San Francisco, CA 94101; (415) 495-4895/346-4063.

FOREIGN

AMIENS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS AGAINST RACISM & FOR FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN PEOPLES, Nov. 12-22, France. 7th yr of fest devoted to presentation of alternative cinema that "contributes to rapprochement between peoples & between different cultures." In past, themes have centered on cinema & apartheid, ind. black American cinema, homage to filmmakers who disappeared in Latin America, Chicano cinema, perspectives on film in Algeria, India, Angola & Mozambique, cinema & racist propaganda, black Hollywood & eroticism in Brazilian cinema. This yr fest focuses on films by & about Native Americans & Argentinian production. Filmmakers from throughout the 3rd world are invited to participate in competitive & information sections. Last year 20 short & feature films on theme of "differences" competed for Grand Prix, Special Jury Prize & Special Public Prize; fest also had info section on ind. 3rd World prod., a retrospective "Les Routes du Sud dan le Cinema Francais" & discussions w/ cinema historians, directors & actors. Two yrs ago the fest established market, which this yr runs from Nov. 15-18, w/ each day focusing on a specific region. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". No fee. Deadline: Sept. 30. Contact: Jean-Pierre Garcia, Festival d'Amiens, 36, rue de Noyon, 8000 Amiens, France; tel: (22) 910144, telex 140754 CHAMCO.

ART ROCK INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF VIDEO MUSIC, October, France. Any topic related to rock music, pro-

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duced on video, eligible & programs are presented in & out of competition; cash prizes are awarded by jury of professionals & members of fest public. Works may be broadcast over cable network set up for fest. Format: 3/4". Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Jean Michel Boinet, Association Wild Rose, C.A.C., B.P. 33, 22022 Saint-Brieuc, France; tel: (96) 335202/330505.

BILBAO INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DOCUMENTARIES & SHORT FILMS, November, Spain. Fest accepts docs of any length & other films under 60 mins. Cats: doc, animation, fiction, experimental. Films should be completed in 2 yrs prior to fest & not received awards in other major Euro. fests. Cash prizes totalling 1,550,000 pts. include Festival Grand Prix of 300,000 pts., as well as a feature doc prize of 250,000 pts. & special prizes in each cat. This is the 29th yr of fest & US ind. docs have won the top prizes several times. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4" for preselection. Entrant pays shipping fees. Deadline: Sept. 30. Contact: Int'l Festival of Documentaries & Short Films of Bilbao, Colon de Larreategui 37-4 Dcha, 48009 Bilbao, Spain; tel. 4248698/4165429, telex 31013 TRACE-E.

BONN EXPERIMENTAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL (EXPERI 87), December, W. Germany. Now in its 9th yr, this competitive alternative ind. fest seeks short (under 20 min.) films of any format, genre & theme; selection committee will look for "originality & innovation." Fest cosponsored by Bonner Kinemathek, film group Die Einstellung & Film-Ag Bonn. Screening fees paid at rate of 3 DM/min. Audience prize & critics' prize of 1000 DM ea. awarded. Format: 16mm, super 8. Contact: EXPERI, c/o Kino in der Brotfabrik, Kreuzstrasse 16, D-5300 Bonn 3, W. Germany.

CAIRO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 30-Dec. 9, Egypt. Accepts features & shorts under 30 min. Sections incl. festival of festivals selection for films which have participated in any int'l fest in last 3 yrs & not commercially released in Egypt & information section for 3rd world & int'l cinema completed in 2 yrs prior to fest. Films selected by special committee of Egyptian filmmakers & critics. All films receive participation certificate on papyrus. Organized by Egyptian Assoc. of Film Writers & Critics. Format: 35mm. Deadline: Oct. 1 (entry forms), Nov. 1 (films). Contact: Saad Eldin Wahba, president, Cairo International Film Festival, 9, Oraby St., Cairo, Egypt; telex 92041 SHERA UN.

CARACAS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF NEW SUPER-8 CINEMA, Nov. 3-8, Venezuela. New, narrative super 8 films of any length that appeal to int'l audience & "show the different forms of expression in films as art" welcome in one of the major super 8 fests (it has been described as "the Cannes of super 8"). An int'l jury picks 2-4 films for best in fest, 1st & 2nd prizes in the $1,500 range. Audiences at screenings & workshops are enthusiastic. Fest is now in 12th yr. Deadline: Oct. 31. Entry fee: $20. Contact: Carlos Castillo, Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Super-8, Apartado 61482, Chacao 1060, Caracas, Venezuela; tel: (02) 771367.

CINANIMA INTERNATIONAL ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL, November, Portugal. Held in Espinho, a small seaside resort town in northern Portugal, this informal competitive animation fest features films in cats of less than 5 min., 5-10 min., 10-40 min., feature length, advertising, doc, 1st film, experimental, children/young adult. Organized by NASCENTE, local cultural coop, fest has grown steadily over its 11 yrs & now screens over 200 films from more than 30 countries, in competitive & non-competitive sections. Many major animation artists enjoy sending newest work there. A panel of 5 int'l animation experts awards "unique" works in each cat. & specifically looks for new productions/new directors to showcase. Films should have been completed in 2 yrs prior to fest. Format: 35mm, 16mm. No entry fee. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Comissao Organizadora do Cinanima 87, Apartado 43, 4501 Espinho Codex, Portugal; tel: 721621/724611.

DUBLIN FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 29-Nov. 8, Ireland. This will be the 3rd yr of noncompetitive fest & program director Michael Dwyer is anxious to include more US ind. features & shorts. Last yr's program was an eclectic int'l mix of 96 features & 22 shorts, from 20 countries w/ large number of US entries. Fest staff scouts other major int'l film fests for possible entries; the fest provides an opportunity for premiere exposure to Irish audiences. Small number of filmmakers may be invited at fest's expense. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Michael Dwyer/Myles Dungan, Dublin Film Festival Ltd., 1 Suffolk St., Dublin 2, Ireland; tel: (01) 792937.

GUIMARAES INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR FILM FESTIVAL, December, Portugal. 18th yr of competition for non-professional films; prizes incl. Grand Prize statuette Castelo D'Oiro, w/ medals for 1st, 2nd & 3rd places & all films receiving participation medal. Films may have been entered in other fests; producers may submit more than one entry. Recognized by IAAFF, FPCA & UNICA. Entry fee: $10. Format: 16mm, 8mm, super 8. Deadline: Oct. Contact: Committee of Int'l Film Festival of Guimaraes, CONVIVIO Associacao Cultural e Recreativa, 4800 Guimaraes, Portugal; tel: 414472; telex: 32499 XAVI P.

HAVANA INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA, VIDEO & TELEVISION (FESTIVAL OF 3 WORLDS), Dec. 3-16, Cuba. Organized by ICAIC, the Cuban Film Institute, this well-attended fest celebrates its 9th yr of spotlighting & encouraging growth of contemporary Latin cinema. In recent yrs, it has also incl. African film, black films from western countries & int'l docs on broader 3rd world issues. Last yr's fest highlighted by establishment of New Latin American Cinema Foundation, headed by Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez & the New Latin American Film & TV School in Havana, an educational media center headed by Fernando Birri & run by & for filmmakers from Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa & Asia. '86 fest showed over 80 features, 150 docs & 400 videos screened at a dozen locations. Policy is to screen all films & videos brought to fest. Fest highlights incl. lectures & discussions, a conference on women & media, Brazilian film retrospective & homages to Brazilian filmmakers, plus MECLA, a film/video market w/ 153 buyers from 33 countries, which did a reported $1.5-million in business. Coral Awards go to productions based on their "artistic contribution to affirming & enriching Latin American & Caribbean cultural identity" for best film, film script, film poster, TV programs & ind. video productions; special awards also given. Competition awards categorized for films of Latin America & Caribbean, non-Latin American & Caribbean films & films related to the regions, in cats of best fiction, doc, animation, children's, editing, acting, script, photography, sound & design. Judges last yr incl. jury head Jorge Amado, Argentinian directors Octavio Getino, Fina Torres & Susana Suranyi, Cuban writer Norberto Fuentes, San Francisco filmmaker Lourdes Portillo, Ecuadoran programmer Ana Maria Salas & Mexican communications professor Florence Toussaint. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta for preview. Return shipping paid. Films not in Spanish should be subtitled. Deadline: Oct. 15. Contact: Int'l Festival of New Latin American Cinema, Television & Video, ICAIC Int'l Film Distributors, Calle 23, No. 1155, Plaza de la Revolucion, Havana 4, Cuba; tel: 34400/305041 x261; telex: 511419 ICAIC CU.

HOF INTERNATIONAL FILM DAYS, October, Germany. Last yr. marked the 20th anniv. for this noncompetitive feature fest, showcasing new US & Euro. ind. films. Hof is a small town north of Munich & fest attracts large & enthusiastic crowds, incl. film professionals & film enthusiasts. Special attention paid to new directors. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4" for preselection only. Deadline: Sept. Contact: Heinz Badewitz, director, Hof Int'l Film Days, Lothstrasse 28, D8000 Munich 2, W. Germany; tel: 09281.

HUY WORLD FESTIVAL OF SHORT FILMS, October, Belgium. 26th yr of fest devoted to amateur & ind. film. Amateur cats incl. fiction (live action/animated w/ dramatic or comic intrigue), reality (doc, tourism, bio) & experimental/abstract (sentiment, music, philosophy, poetry). All films must be less than 30 min. Awards incl. gold, silver & bronze medals; top amateur prize is Cwerneu d'Or & top independent prize is Coq Hardi. Shipping fees paid by entrants. Format: 16mm, super 8, 8mm. Fest cosponsored by Camera Club-Huy & Maison de la Culture de Huy/Meuse. Deadline: Sept. Contact: Jacques Warzee, secretary, Festival Mondial du Cinema de Courts Metrages, 8 rue de Leumont, B-5240 Wanzee, Belgium; tel: (085) 217064.

TORELLO INTERNATIONAL CONTEST OF MOUNTAIN CINEMA, Nov 15-21, Spain. Films & videos on mountain themes, incl. alpinism, climbing, expeditions, speleogy, skiing, mountain sports, protection of nature, flora & fauna, all qualify for incl. in 5th edition of this fest. Prizes incl. the Gran Prix Vila de Torello, which is a Gold Edelweiss award & 150,000 Ptas. for best film; Silver Edelweiss & 75,000 Ptas. for best climbing, mountain, ecological, super 8 & video entries; & commemorative medal & 30,000 Ptas. for audience prize. Films & videos must have been completed after 1981. Formats: 16mm, 1/2" (must be original form), super 8. Deadline: Sept. 30. Contact: Joan Salarich, director, Certamen Internacional de Cinema de Muntanya, P.O. Box 19-08570 Torello (Barcelona), Spain; tel: (93) 859 2899; telex 53174E.

TOKYO VIDEO FESTIVAL, November, Japan. 10th yr of competitive all-video event sponsored by JVC. Entries submitted in 2 divisions: 1 consisting of any style or theme and 2nd of "video letter exchanges" for compositions that explore the possibilities of video as two-way communication. Video Grand Prize & JVC President Award are $2,500 plus 15-day round trip to Japan, w/ awards in both divisions ranging from $150-1,000. Max length: 20 min. Format: 1/2", 3/4". Beta. Deadline: Sept. 10. Contact: US JVC Corporation, 41 Slater Drive, Elmwood Park, NJ 07407, Attn: Tokyo Video Festival Tapes; tel: (201) 794-3900.

VALLADOLID INTERNATIONAL FILM WEEK, Oct. 23-31, Spain. 32nd yr of rapidly growing competitive fest that has become one of biggest in Spain, showing wide spectrum of films in official, informative & "historical

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times" sections. Films in official section must be 35mm & may be awarded a Gold Spike or Silver Spike for best film, Francois Truffaut Prize for best director, or prizes in several other cats. Separate jury confers awards in "historical times" section, which consists of docs & newsreels. Entrant pays shipping fees. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Sept. 20. Contact: Fernando Lara, Director, Semana Internacional de Cine de Valladolid, Juan de Juni, 4, 47006 Valladolid, Spain; tel: 305899/ 305788.

CORRECTION: The June issue of *The Independent* contained an incorrect address for Gordon Hitchens, the US contact for the Nyon International Documentary Film Festival. It should be 214 W. 85th Street, #3W, New York, NY 10024.

THE FIVF FESTIVAL BUREAU
has established a tape library of members' current works to expedite screenings for upcoming film and video festivals. Members interested in depositing their work in the library should contact: Kathryn Bowser, Festival Bureau director, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. 1/2" and 3/4" tapes will be accepted.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the Governor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Beldon Fund, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

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The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy Rent Sell," "Freelancers" & "Post-production" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$15 per issue.** Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear.

Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., August 8 for the October issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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NEGATIVE MATCHING: Accurate and clean cutting. 35 mm., 16mm for printing or video transfers. Laboratory liaison with Technicolor & Studio Film Lab. CODA FILM's Independent clients include Ericka Beckman, Charles Atlas, and Chantal Akerman. Call (212) 265-1191, ask for Andre.

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NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., August 8 for the October issue. Send notices to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences Workshops

SUMMER VIDEO WORKSHOPS continue at the Center for New Television in Chicago, incl. Video Special Effects, Aug. 10, 12, 17, 19, 24 & 25. Contact: CNTV, 11 E. Hubbard St., Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 565-1787.

FILM & VIDEO WORKSHOPS at the Film Art Foundation: A&B Rolling, Aug. 8 & Blocking for Camera, Aug. 4 & 6. Contact: FAF, 346 9th St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

INTERTEXTUALITY: Literary & Cinematic Representation, the 13th annual conference sponsored by the Florida State Univ. Comparative Lit. & Film Circle at the Florida State Conf. Ctr., Jan. 28-30, 1988. Abstracts of papers, approximately 300 words & proposals for seminars & workshops must be submitted by Oct. 1, 1987 to Elaine D. Cancalon & Antoine Spacagna, codirectors, Film & Literature Conf., Dept. of Modern Languages & Linguistics, Florida State Univ., Tallahassee, FL 32306-1020. For more info, contact Joan Grant; (904) 644-3801.

VIDEO EXPO NEW YORK: Sept. 28-Oct. 2 at the Jacob Javits Convention Ctr. in NYC. Contact: Barbara Dales, Knowledge Industry Publications, 701 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY 10604; (914) 328-9157 or (800) 248-KIPI.

Films Tapes Wanted

INPUT '88: The annual international conference on public television, to be held in Philadelphia May 1-8, 1988, is soliciting programs that either have been, will be, or could be aired on public television. The selection committee, which will convene in West Berlin in the fall of 1987, seeks programs that are "innovative in form or content"; "original, courageous, experimental"; "unusual or controversial"; and "that in some way break new ground within a broadcast constituency." 3/4" cassettes only in PAL, SECAM, or NTSC standard. For more information, contact: INPUT 88 Secretariat, Frances McElroy, WHYY, Inc., 150 N. Sixth St., Philadelphia, PA 19106, before Aug. 31.

INDEPENDENT FOCUS: Seeks film & videotapes by American independents for local broadcast on WNET-Ch. 13 in NYC. Submit 16mm prints or 3/4" cassettes for screening along with completed submission form by Oct. 1. All genres of any length accepted, but must be broadcast premiere. For info & appl., contact: Faith Kiermaier, coordinating producer, Independent Focus, WNET/13, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 560-2817.

NATIONAL BLACK TOURING CIRCUIT: Package of 7 films by Woodie King, Jr., available for screening, incl. *Right On!, Epitaph, Torture of Mothers, The Black Theatre Movement, Death of a Prophet, Ghetto & The Long Night.* Contact: Nat'l Black Touring Circuit, 417 Convent Ave., New York, NY 10031; (212) 598-0040 or 926-2292.

DISTRIBUTOR OF HEALTH CARE MEDIA seeks films or videos on AIDS, cancer, eating disorders, ethics, gerontology & neonatal care. Excellent marketing budget equals max. exposure for your films. High royalties. Phone (217) 384-4838; IL.

VIDEOLACE ARTISTS' ARCHIVE: Accepting submissions from video artists who wish to have their tapes shown to visiting curators. Noncommercial, recent work wanted. Tapes will not be shown publicly without written permission & can be submitted or returned at any time. Send 3/4" dubs to Anne Bray, LACE, 1804 Industrial St., Los Angeles, CA 90021; (213) 624-5650.

LACPS-VIDEO encourages artists, curators, teachers, activists & producers to submit proposals to guest curate for its 1987-88 series of monthly exhibitions of new & challenging video. Proposed programs should run from 1-2 hrs in length & consist of works united by theme, style, or format. Works must have originated on tape. Guest curators are expected to provide tapes incl. in their programs & be present to introduce & discuss the works at screening in West Hollywood, CA. Curators will receive $200 honorarium. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Video Committee, LACPS, 814 S. Spring St, LA, CA 90014.

RURAL IMAGES: Film/video exhibition series seeks videos on rural life for exhibition & possible local cablecast. Send info & previews to Jean Haynes, Box 636, Brocton, NY 14716, or c/o Olean Public Library, Olean, NY 14760.

PRODUCERS W/ DISTRIBUTION RIGHTS: Horizon Video seeks films & videos of all genres for TV, cable & home distribution in Israel. Send titles & synopses to: H.V., 11 Brookside Cr., Bronxville, NY 10708.

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TEACH IN JAPAN: Individuals with degree or experience in video & video production wishing to teach English for one year in Japan to employees of major corporations/ govt. ministries, write: Int'l Education Services, Shin Taiso Bldg., 10-7, Dogenzaka 2-chone, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150, Japan.

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AIVF would like to thank these companies for participating. Other firms wishing to be included should contact Ethan Young, AIVF Membership Services, (212) 473-3400.

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REGISTRY OF ASIAN AMERICAN ARTISTS being compiled by Asian CineVision. Will include film & videomakers, writers, folk artists, graphic artists, and others. Individuals of Southeast Asian background especially urged to respond. Submit name, address, phone, arts speciality, art form & medium to: Development Office, Asian CineVision, 32 East Broadway, New York, NY 10002.

Publications Software

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS: April 1987 Guide to the NEA is now available. Incl. brief descriptions for NEA programs & complete listing of all grants. Contact: NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

REPRODUCTIVE HAZARDS IN THE ARTS & CRAFTS: booklet now available from Ctr. for Occupational Hazards, 5 Beekman St., New York, NY 10038; (212) 227-6220.

FILMS IN THE HUMANITIES: Special edition of the *New York Council for the Humanities News* incl. directory of films in traveling screenings/forum program. Contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, 10th fl., New York, NY 10038.

JUST PUBLISHED: PARTICIPATE's comprehensive directory of New York State resources for public access cable & low cost video prod. Listings are organized by county & incl. cable access & media art centers, libraries, schools, universities & other organizations that offer prod. or postprod. equip., training, funding, or other resources. Useful publications also noted. 220 pages, $10. For more info, contact: PARTICIPATE, a project of the Alternative Media Information Ctr., Claremont Ave., #32, New York, NY 10027; (212) 316-9050.

ARTISTS' HOUSING MANUAL: *A Guide to Living in New York City*, published by Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. Up-to-date legal primer written by attys Nancy Biberman & Roger Evans. $12.98 plus $2 postage & handling. Available from VLA, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., New York, NY 10019.

VIDEO HANDBOOK is now available from UCVideo. Written by video pros, the handbook is a step-by-step guide to portable video prod. & postprod. $8 plus $1.25 postage & handling per book. Order through UCVideo, 425 Ontario St., SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 624-4444.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES 21st Annual Report is now available. Incl. brief descriptions of NEH programs & complete listing of all grants. Free while the supply lasts. Contact: NEH 1986 Annual Report, Rm. 409, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

Resources Funds

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS: Grant application deadlines: Sept. 1 for Narrative Film Development (script development and preproduction activities); Sept. 15, American Film Institute Independent Filmmaker Program; Nov. 13, Film/Video Production. Contact: Media Arts Program, NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 682-5452.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Next deadline for humanities projects in the media: Sept. 18. Contact: James Dougherty, NEH, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 786-0378.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION Fellowship application deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: SCAC, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201.

NEW YORK STATE FILM EXHIBITION PROGRAM grants available from the Film Bureau. Offered to nonprofit organizations in NYS for film screenings of ind. works or films not ordinarily available to the public. Matching funds of up to $300 are available for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadlines: Aug. 15 & Jan. 15. Contact: Film Bureau, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR AWARDS in all disciplines awarded to faculty & scholars. Deadline for research in Africa, Asia, Europe & the Middle East: Sept. 15. For applications, call or write: Council for Int'l Exchange of Scholars, 11 Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1257; (202) 939-5401.

UNITED KINGDOM ARTS FELLOWSHIP IN FILMMAKING, available through the Fulbright Scholar Program, awarded to one American and one British filmmaker. Deadline: September 15. For applications, call or write: Council for Int'l Exchange of Scholars, 11 Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1257; (202) 939-5401.

NEW YORK FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS: $6,000 fellowships for individual New York State artists. Deadlines: Aug. 31, playwriting/screenwriting; Sept. 8, film, photography; Sept. 28, video, performance art/emergent forms. Contact: Artists' Fellowship Program, NYFA, 5 Beekman St., Ste. 600, New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-3900.

LONG ISLAND ASSOC. FOR MOTION PICTURE ARTS: Grant available for a Long Island-based film production. Documentary, narrative, or experimental. 1987/88 grant: $500. Deadline: Sept. 30. Contact: LIAMPA, Box 193, East Rockaway, NY 11518.

ETHNIC CULTURES PARTNERSHIP PROJECT: Mini-grants of $1,000 for arts projects & $1-4,000 for project support available from the Rhode Island Council on the Arts to encourage ethnic diversity in the arts. Pilot program targeting underserved artists & arts groups from target populations, specifically Afro-Americans, Asians, Hispanics & Native Americans. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Gary Hogan, (401) 277-3880.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING's Open Solicitation deadlines for FY 1988: Sept. 11, '87; Jan. 8 & April 22, '88. For applications, contact: CPB, 1111 16th St, NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 955-5100.

Trims & Glitches

CONGRATS to Checkerboard Foundation Video Award recipients Ken Feingold, *India Time*; Ernest Gusella, *The Red Star*; Sachiko Hamada & Scott Sinker, *Shantytown: Homeless on the Lower East Side* & Tomiyo Sasaki, *The Dreams of Christopher Columbus.*

KUDOS to Helen Garvy & Dan Bessie, whose feature film *Hard Traveling* was invited to the Moscow Film Festival & has been picked up by New Yorker Pictures.

KUDOS to winners of the Center for New Television equipment access awards who will receive $800 of credit towards the use of Fairlight Computer Video Instruments: Ritakay Halvorsen for *Going Underground*, Jeanine Mellinger, *Disorders of Communcations, Part One* & Eric Zimmerman, *Nowhere Fast.*

CONGRATULATIONS to KIDSNET, the computerized clearinghouse for children's radio & TV, who have received a grant from the NEA Artists in Education Program to expand the KIDSNET database.

KUDOS to winner of the 1987 National Media Owl Award, Lynn Mueller for *Silver into Gold.*

CONGRATS to AIVF members awarded CPB Open Solicitation production funds for FY 1987: Dave Davis, *The Golden Years? Abuse of the Elderly in America*; Andrew Pearson, *The Phillippines: America's Colonial Legacy*; Henry Hampton, *Eyes on the Prize—Series 2*; Helena Ladd, *A Time of Turmoil: The Church in Brazil*; and Robert Mugge, *Summer Night Music.*

LEO DRATFIELD ANIMATION FUND seeking contributions in order to create a permanent endowment and to distribute awards to two New York University animation students for upcoming academic year. Contact: Leo Dratfield Animation Fund, New York University, Tisch School of the Arts, 25 West 4th St, 4th Fl., New York, NY 10012.

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INDEPENDENTS WELCOMED

A PLACE OF OUR OWN: INDEPENDENTS AND THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC TELEVISION

Martha Gever

For independent video and filmmakers working in the U.S. during the past few decades, the public television system has often appeared as a Janus-like institution—a fortress of established interests with little regard for radical ideas or unusual treatment of subjects and, at the same time, a possible home for just such work. The ostensibly noncommercial foundation and mission of public TV promised independents a place within the structures of national (and local) media networks and, in some isolated instances, has provided just that. But, more frequently, public TV—the stations and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the national program financing entity—has proved reluctant to accord independent work a central role. Throughout the seventies, as public TV's existence expanded and became solidified, independent producers agitated for recognition. And in 1978, federal lawmakers took note, including in the 1978 Public Telecommunications Financing Act language that seemed to guarantee participation by independents: CPB was authorized to promote the production of programs "of high quality, diversity, creativity, excellence and innovation, which are obtained from diverse sources...." Further, the bill specified that a "substantial amount [of CPB's program dollars] shall be reserved for distribution to independent producers...for the production of programs." Speaking in the House on behalf of the bill, one of its sponsors, Representative Henry Waxman (D-California), reported that the House and Senate conferees intended that the "substantial amount" of CPB's program production budget devoted to independent work to mean "at least 50 percent."

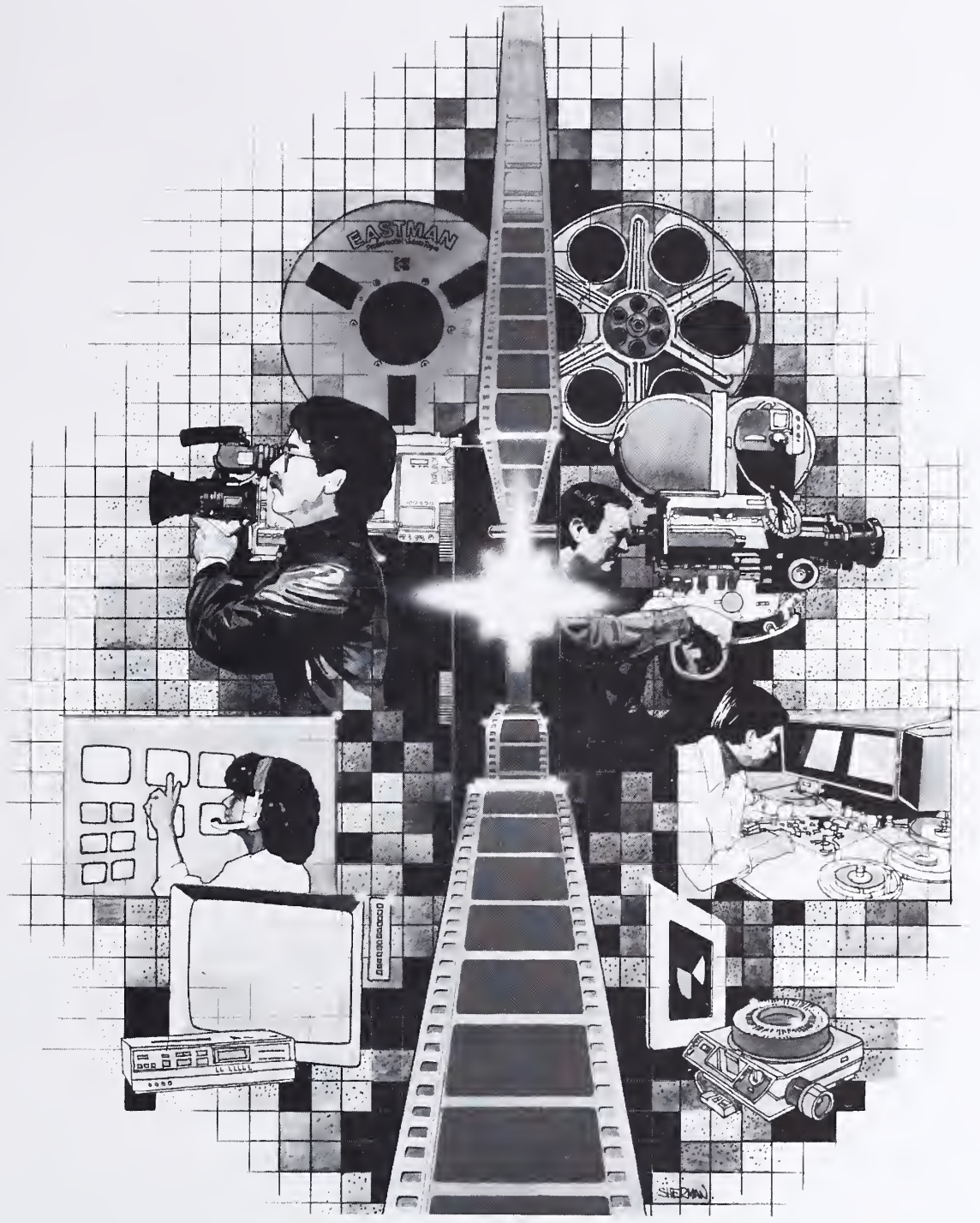
This condensed history—familiar to many AIVF members—bears recounting, not to evoke bitter nostalgia, but to introduce once again questions concerning the actual developments that followed implementation of the 1978 Act, specifically, the experience of independent producers with CPB's Program Fund (established in 1980), and current proposals for reforms of public television circulating in the independent community. The pages of *The Independent* have regularly carried news of the steady erosion of the presence of independents in the public TV arena. And we have also chronicled the efforts organized in response—most recently, the activities and negotiations of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers, a loose confederation of independent producers' representatives and media center administrators spearheaded by AIVF in 1984. Since then the Coalition has been meeting with Program Fund staff and other public TV executives three times a year and has achieved some degree of success—for example, in convincing the Program Fund to establish a supplemental promotional fund for CPB-financed independent productions—but the concessions made by CPB have been piecemeal at best. The massive commitments of funds for station-produced series has increased unabated, and, over the years, the Program Fund's sole funding mechanism earmarked for smaller independents, Open Solicitations, has become dominated by station interests, while the production funds available have remained relatively stagnant.

The neglect of its congressional mandate on the part of CPB coupled with the persistent belief by independent producers that public television can be an appropriate and important vehicle for the production and distribution of their work—as well as changes in the political composition of Congress favorable to support for *public* television—has generated a renewed effort to realize a genuine independent presence in the system. Initiated by the Association of California Independent Public Television Producers, a network of California media organizations active within the National Coalition, a blueprint for an Independent Programming Service is taking shape. The concept recalls the Center for Independent Television proposed by the Carnegie Commission on the Future of Public Broadcasting in 1979, "whose job would be to develop broadcast formats that can take advantage of the range of talent among independent producers." The Carnegie Commission's scheme for revamped and improved public television also described an endowment-based funding structure, cushioned against the vagaries of political gamesmanship (e.g., Reagan's 1981 attempt to defund the entire system or the subsequent packing of the CPB board of directors with right-wing ideologues). Neither the endowment nor the Center for Independent Television has ever been seriously discussed at the congressional level. Last fall, however, with the reauthorization of public television on the congressional agenda in 1988, the ACIPTP drafted a discussion paper, published in the October/November issue of the Bay Area Video Coalition's newsletter, *Video Networks*, outlining the purpose and functions of a "Network for New Television."

Briefly, the ACTIPTP envisioned a combined system of production funding and distribution of independent films and videotapes "more challenging and unconventional than presently available on public or commercial networks," with particular attention to the relationship between such work and the audiences it would both create and serve. The Network they described would acquire and commission work "in all genres" and "explore a number of programming strategies: series, magazine shows, specials..." and "would rely on public television licensees as its primary outlet." The ACIPTP encouraged and received a number of comments on its initial paper, leading to several redrafts by that group and a parallel effort by AIVF's Advocacy Committee in New York City. In the intervening months, the proposal has been refined (and the entity provisionally renamed the Independent Programming Service): the California contingent compiled a detailed statistical breakdown of production funding by the Program Fund (published in the July/August issue of *Video Networks*) and the New York group drafted a more detailed rationale for an IPS along with a more precise definition of its structure and operations.

Using the occasion of the June conference of the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers, representatives from both working groups met and adopted a two-part platform for restructuring public television: 1. the establishment of an autonomous IPS by Congress, with guaranteed funding and, 2. the legislative recognition and guaranteed funding of the minority public broadcasting consortia. The latter point addresses the absence of any statutory basis for the five existing minority consortia—Asian-American, Black, Latino, Native American, and Pacific Islands—within CPB, along with their experience of insufficient financial commitments from CPB. The two proposals reinforce one another, since the secured existence of the minority consortia intersects with plans for the IPS, which would be mandated to develop and distribute programming for diverse audiences—a task similar to that already undertaken by the various minority consortia.

At this point (early July), groups on both coasts are preparing the next stage in the strategy: to expand the coalition to include like-minded media and non-media organizations and constitutencies and to educate the public, the industry, and congressional representatives about the importance of both items. As the effort progresses, greater participation by members of the independent media community will be necessary. Those interested should contact Lawrence Sapadin, executive director, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.



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COVER: Though the audiences for Woody Vasulka's *Art of Memory* may not be the same as those for political documentaries, artist Vasulka and his social-issue contemporaries face similar dilemmas when trying to distribute their work. In the first of two articles on nonbroadcast video distribution, Renee Tajima provides an overview of this aspect of the business of independent video distribution in the U.S. Photo by Marita Sturken, courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix.

LATINO LAUNCH

A Latino beat that has nothing to do with salsa or *La Bamba* can be heard in the New York City media community, where Latino producers have mobilized to form the Latino Film and Video Collaborative. The idea for the group came about last November, when New Yorkers Alfredo Bejar and Zydnia Nazario met for the first time at the Guadalupe Cultural Center's CineFestival in San Antonio, Texas. That they encountered one another so far from home confirmed the lack of a viable network of Latino media artists in New York. Back in the city, Bejar and Nazario, along with Frank Algarin and Evette Nieves-Cruz, constituted an organizing committee and sent over 75 introductory letters and questionnaires to Latino mediamakers in the New York City area.

The overwhelmingly interest they received in reply to their inquiry about the formation of an organization took them by surprise, and they convened the first meeting of the Latino Film and Video Collaborative on July 15 at Charas on the Lower East Side. Nearly 40 people—including students as well as veteran producers—came to the first meeting. Word had spread quickly, and many producers unknown to the organizers attended. "A lot of us felt that, at this time, there really is a need for this support network," Nazario explained. "The number of Latinos in this country is growing, and we all share a basic understanding that we have a social responsibility to address the particular needs of our community from our point of view. We want to reverse the underrepresentation of Latino voices and art in the media community."

Although members of the Collaborative are interested in making connections with their peers in South and Central America, their principal concern is to build relationships with Latino mediamakers in the U.S. First, however, the Collaborative's steering committee has the task of giving shape to the organization. At the July meeting they formed various working groups to iron out questions of structure, resources, and fundraising. Both Nazario and Bejar admit that the initial gathering produced an unrealistic shopping list of possible projects for the new organization, but instead they hope to concentrate on practical long-range goals. "The generation before us fought long battles and achieved such Latino programs as *Realidades* on public TV in the sixties," Bejar reflected. "These achievements soon faded, and the spontaneity involved became diffused." With an awareness of the experiences of the past and aided by the energy of younger members, the Collaborative will work slowly towards a sound and reliable foundation for the group. "Right now, we just want to make sure the organization survives and remains independent of other groups and interests. We want to get to know each other and find out each other's needs and capabilities. We don't want to clutter our agenda with too much programming," said Nazario. In the next year, the Collaborative intends to secure nonprofit legal status, conduct fundraising, establish a permanent location for its activities, and share resources among members. They also plan to sponsor fundraising seminars and publish a newsletter.

QUYNH THAI

LEGAL EAGLES

Filmmakers needing free legal advice now have at least one place to turn. Since January, the Independent Feature Project in New York City has been developing a Resource Program which includes entertainment law among its six services. The other categories are production management, budgeting and scheduling; theatrical distribution and ancilliary sales; technical issues; union issues; and computer support.

The legal consultation program enables IFP members to discuss their questions and problems with one of four participating entertainment lawyers in up to two half-hour telephone consultations. Three of the attorneys work at New York law firms (Lubell and Lubell; Frankfurt, Garbus, Klein and Selz; Parker, Auspitz, Neesemann and Delehanty) and one is from Frederikson and Byron in Minneapolis. The half-hour consultations are arranged after a filmmaker contacts IFP with a list of specific questions. The list is then sent to an attorney for review and, in theory, helps focus the subsequent discussion in a way that will best utilize the limited time. The inital half-hour phone consulation may then be followed by a second call, if necessary. As an supplement to these one-on-one consultations, IFP also plans to develop group legal workshops for its members, according to program director Karen Arikian. Roundtable sessions will bring two or three lawyers together with about a dozen filmmakers, selected by IFP on a first-come first-served basis, and will cover whatever topics that particular set of producers wants to discuss.

At this stage, IFP has not monitored the outcome of the legal consultations which have taken place and does not know whether filmmakers have found the time granted to be adequate or whether any producers have subsequently moved into a regular contractual arrangement with an attorney. Such a tracking of the program, says Arikian, is also planned for the future.

PATRICIA THOMSON

AMATEUR AUTEURS

Now 16mm film- and videomakers have equal opportunity for broadcasting their work on a French television show previously restricted to super 8 film. In September, producer Armand Ventre expanded his *TV des Telespectateurs*, a half-hour weekly program which has long provided a showcase for amateur films, to include video and 16mm film. Ventre has been a familiar figure at international super 8 film festivals for many years, choosing films from all over the world for his program, with a preference for works with broad appeal and a demonstrated penchant for humor and light entertainment. One primary criterion he applies to his selections is that work not depend on language for comprehensibility. *TV des Telespectateurs* airs on Antenne 2 in France and is also broadcast in Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, and in Montréal. Ventre pays 220 FF (approximately $36) per minute acquisition fees for short (two to 25 minutes) documentary, fiction, and experimental work and 270 FF per minute for animated work. Submissions must be on 3/4" U-matic videocassette (PAL , SECAM, or NTSC) and should be sent to: Armand Ventre, *TV des Telespectateurs*, 22 Avenue Montaigne, 75387 Paris, Cedex 08, France.

TONI TREADWAY

DRATFIELD FUND ESTABLISHED

Richard Provotin, head of the Animation Program at the New York University Tisch School of the Arts, has announced the establishment of a new production fund in the memory of Leo Dratfield, the late film distributor and advocate who died last year. It is hoped that the Leo Dratfield Animation Fund can provide production monies to two students annually in the Department of Film and Television Animation Program. If $10,000 is raised, a permanent endowment in Dratfield's name can be created to continue the award. Donations to the fund should be sent directly to the NYU Treasurer's Office, specifying that the tax-deductible gift be deposited to the Leo Dratfield Animation Fund: New York University, Tisch School of the Arts, 25 W. 4th St., 4th floor, New York, NY 10012.

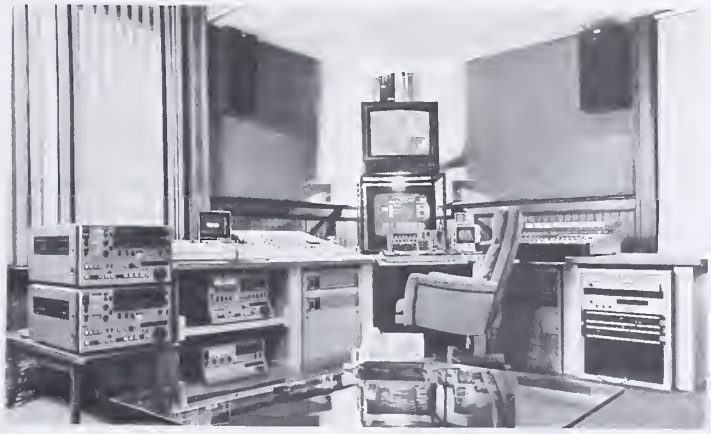
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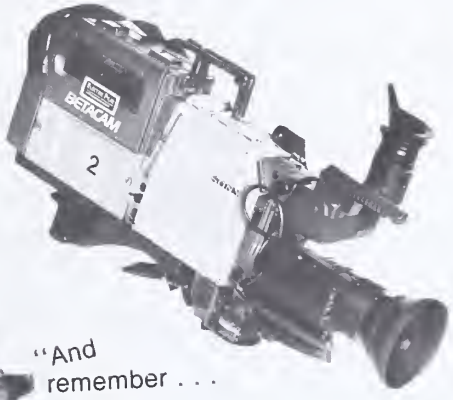
SEQUELS

Attempts by Congress to guarantee the **fairness doctrine**, the broadcast requirement that governed coverage of controversial issues and contrasting viewpoints, have been dashed ["Congress and the FCC Decide the Fate of the Fairness



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Doctrine," May 1987]—at least temporarily. First, both houses of Congress voted in favor of a bill that would codify the doctrine, previously enforced by the Federal Communications Commission on the basis of precedents established through FCC rule-making and legal decisions. Then President Reagan vetoed the bill, and, since neither the House nor the Senate could muster the two-thirds majority needed to override, the bill floundered. In August the four FCC members voted unanimously to rescind the doctrine, basing their decision on the theory of broadcasters' First Amendment rights and, thus, ruled that the doctrine is unconstitutional. By reversing one of the long-standing regulatory tenets of the public service function of broadcasting, the FCC under Reagan accomplished one of the declared goals of the Reagan appointees on the commission. However, while the advocates of deregulation and a laissez-faire broadcast industry, who heralded the FCC's decision as a victory, have won the most recent battle, the war is not over. The plaintiff in the lawsuit that served as the launching pad for the FCC's action has appealed the decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals which left the decision of the doctrine's constitutionality up to the FCC. Meanwhile, Representative Edward Markey (D-Massachusetts), chair of the House Telecommunications Subcommittee, has stated his determination to amend a new fairness doctrine bill to other legislation that Reagan dare not veto within the year.

Under a new scholars-in-residence program supported by the **Rockefeller Foundation**, the Whitney Museum of American Art's Film and Video Department has appointed its first two fellowship recipients ["Rockefeller Reconsiders Media Policy," December 1986]. Clyde Taylor, associate professor of English at Tufts University, and Dana Polan, associate professor of film and English at the University of Pittsburgh, have been awarded grants for the study of "Media Culture: New Technologies in the Arts." Taylor will be researching "Black Cinema in the Post-Esthetic Era" during the fall semester of the 1987/88 academic year. Polan will follow in the spring with work on "Postmoderism and American Independent Cinema." The Rockefeller Foundation Fellowships in the Humanities program at the Whitney has been funded for a three-year period, from the fall of 1987 through the spring of 1990. The department of film and video anticipates up to six scholars to take part. The one or two fellows selected each year by an advisory panel will undertake their research at the museum under the supervision of John Hanhardt, the Whitney's curator of film and video.

The most recent nominee to the **Corporation for Public Broadcasting's board of directors** is Charles Lichenstein. Formerly a vice president of the Public Broadcasting Service and a United Nations delegate serving under Jeanne Kirkpat-

rick, Lichenstein was also a member of Ronald Reagan's 1980 transition team that issued a report recommending the withdrawal of federal funding for public broadcasting. He is a senior fellow at the conservative Heritage Foundation and an advocate of the primacy of PBS stations within the public broadcasting system. Four previous nominees—Archie Purvis, Sheila Burke Tate, Marshall Turner, and William Lee Hanley—were confirmed by the Senate last June. One of the first matters undertaken by the expanded board at its July 2 meeting was the election of acting president Donald Ledwig as president ["Sequels," July 1987].

LETTERS

LIVE AND LEARN

To the editor:

Over the months I have read a number of complaints about the Learning Channel's *The Independents* series ["Letters," May 1987]. As both a distributor of independent films and a former cable programmer, I feel that many of the criticisms are unfair. Based on my professional experience, I am aware of how difficult it is to place many very good independent films and videos which do not have traditional entertainment values. That TLC is attempting to fill this void on a national basis should only be commended. As with any new project, there are always "bugs" to be worked out. However, I have always found TLC very responsive to comments and suggestions. Many of the problems facing TLC, including channel allocation and audience awareness, are still common throughout the cable industry. After working many years in that end of the business, I believe that these problems are of an evolutionary nature, rather than inherent. As the trend continues towards basic cable services, such as TLC, strengthens, we can also expect the same for *The Independents* series.

—Suzanne Rose
director of Television Marketing and
Distribution, Phoenix/BFA
New York, NY

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THE STATE OF THE SECOND CITY: CHICAGO AREA INDEPENDENTS MEET



Carrie Oviatt

In his keynote address at the second Chicago Area Indepedent Film and Video Conference, filmmaker Richard Schmiechen observed, "There are now enough independent filmmakers in Chicago to fill the first two rows" of Columbia College's Getz Theater, the site of last June's conference. "I'm happy to see the expansion." Schmiechen's head count was accurate for the opening night audience. And his appraisal of Chicago's independent media population was accurate, too—it has grown significantly—but this year's conference turn-out of 150 actually represented a decrease from the nearly 400 who attended the Chicago Area Film and Video Network's first conference in 1983. CAFVN coordinator Howard Gladstone attributed the low attendance to poor timing—students and educators were just starting vacation—and an increase in the registration fees—$65 ($55 for CAFVN members).

"It's essential that we keep organized in order to keep reminding ourselves who we are," remarked Schmiechen, a Chicago native. Schmiechen's 1984 collaboration with Robert Epstein, *The Times of Harvey Milk*, won an Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary. Many in the Chicago audience knew Schmiechen or knew the film and its success. Many also know well what Schmiechen was here to remind them—that it doesn't all happen on the coasts. In the mid-seventies, Schmiechen moved to New York City, where many ambitious independent producers migrated. But in 1987, he and others, like independent producer Muriel Jackson, were reversing the direction of that route. Jackson worked in network television in New York, where she weathered many of the typical frustrations of a career in commercial media. After relocating to Atlanta, she found a more satisfying way to exercise her video skills as a producer in Atlanta's growing cable-access community. Then the Chicago native realized that her home town now offers the ultimate combination of healthy activism and independent media. "I'm from Chicago, and I'm familiar with the politics and the development of cable access here," Jackson said. "Chicago offers a wide, active market. It also offers more political awareness for the messages I'm sending out."

Both Schmiechen and Jackson bring considerable experience to Chicago, where over the years media activists have poured a solid foundation for what has become a vital producing community. At the same time, public funding cuts in the region continue, and local public television still brushes aside what it considers independent media gadflies. Even so, a growing number of media artists have managed to share success in Chicago, some of them riding the coattails of a flourishing media business in both commercial film and video production. The efforts of people like Susan Kellett of the Illinois Film Office have brought a slew of feature film productions to Chicago, where producers can take advantage of unique settings and eager-to-work union crews.

That kind of work has given independents like freelance cinematographer Michelle Crenshaw a big boost. Crenshaw recounted her success story during a panel on freelancing, moderated by Bonnie Michaels, president of the Chicago chapter of Women in Film. In 10 months Crenshaw racked up enough apprentice work to get her union card as a camera assistant with the International Association of Theatrical and Stage Employees (IATSE) local 666. By the time Crenshaw entered IATSE's apprentice program, she had already been freelancing for two years. By doing some "heavy networking" with camera operators already in the union, Crenshaw was able to log enough work to complete what is normally a three-year apprentice program.

Chicago's commercial video production is also turning heads. As Susan Regele wrote in "Commercial Post: A Breeze in the Windy City," in the November 1986 issue of *Videography*, the "'Chicago cut,' a style of editing and finishing unique to the city," has made a big splash in the


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Second City conferees discuss festivals, distribution, and foreign markets. (Left to right: Barbara Trent, the Empowerment Project; Tom Brueffeman, M & R Amusement; moderator Loretta Smith, independent producer; Jenny Rohrer, Kartemquin Films; Christina Haller, Films Around the World.)

Photo: Bill Stamets

television industry. And independent producers have also moved in and out of that commercial video stream, assisted by the training offered by production education programs in Chicago—like those at Schmiechen's alma mater Columbia College—that feed technically proficient students into Chicago's media pool.

Good times for commercial production in Chicago, however, have not necessarily meant an easier time for independents. As Schmiechen noted, being an independent producer in this country means having the "freedom to be ambitious but poor." Thus, the panel promising to offer secrets and exemplary stories on how to find money attracted the largest crowd. "Packaging and Financing Independent Projects," moderated by Kay Clifford of the Independent Feature Project/Midwest, delivered on its promise. Panelists offered valuable insights on everything from how to research potential markets (everyone urged film- and videomakers to do so *before* starting production) to the specifics of limited partnerships and stock offerings that allow producers to sell options on projects to investors across state lines. They even gave advice explaining legal methods of avoiding the need for Securities and Exchange Commission approval for such ventures by using "private placement memoranda." And Michael Dawson, producer of *Citizen Welles*, a film on the media artistry of Orson Welles, offered suggestions on "exciting" investors, sprinkled with practical tidbits like tips on how to use private screenings as fundraisers within the SEC guidelines for "acceptable ways to raise money from strangers."

For those who found stock options and legal memoranda intimidating, producer Phil Koch referred the audience to the *Illinois Production Guide*, which lists attorneys well-versed in media legalese. "The first call is free," he encouraged. Dawson also emphasized that legal advice is a necessity, and counseled that there are some attorneys who, if they believe in a project, will grant deferrals on fees. There are also attorneys who may want to invest in projects. Greg Friedman, a partner in a law firm, told the audience how a friend who is graphic designer interested him in financing an independent project, *In the Bush of Ghosts*, shot in video and transferred to film. Because "there are few legal or financial incentives left in investing in film," Friedman said, he and his production partners went in search of an investor who would appreciate the unique photographic artistry in the project. They found one—a major private collector of photographs in Chicago.

Another popular panel explored and explained how to stake a claim in the growing home video market. Milos Stehlik, director of Facets Multimedia, an alternative film theater in Chicago—and now a video rental house as well—moderated the panel. The small niche carved for "special interest video" in the home video market has tripled in the past two years, according to figures offered by Albert Nader of Travel Network. Nader's company distributes and produces travel videos and information tapes, including a series reconstructing the Civil War. Travel is the third largest retail industry in the country, and 26 million people go abroad each year. (Travel Network's hottest sellers are on Hawaii and the U.S. national parks—a reflection, Nader said, of the five million and three million American tourists, respectively, who vacation in those places.) He explained that his company's involvement in distribution came after rejections from numerous distributors who claimed the market wasn't suitable for their tapes. Travel Network's record disputed the nay-sayers, leading Nader to caution that the term "distributor" can be deceptive. Distributors usually carry what video stores want, he said, rarely attempting to devise creative marketing. He also predicted that the future of special interest home video will be bookstores and department stores. Travel Network went directly to publishers engaged in direct mail marketing (Reader's Digest, Time-Life Books) to find investors for their Civil War series.

Speaking on the same panel, Darrel Moore of Maljack Productions, Inc. (MPI) pointed out that the same distributors who allow video stores to determine the contents of their catalogues also distribute to the major bookstores—e.g., if you want to get into Walden Books, you have to sell to Ingram, their distributor. Moore estimated that there are currently approximately 30 major distributors. "They're always swallowing each other up, so its hard to keep track." He agreed with Nader that "distributor" is a misnomer, claiming that most are actually wholesale suppliers. To get to a major distributor, according to Moore, is "virtually impossible." When a producer decides that the "old-boy network" of distribution is "useless," he explained, "you either take it to a company like us and we do the exotic distribution for you, or you do it yourself."

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in-house crew for original productions. Recently, MPI entered into a unique distribution deal with Bill Stamets, a Chicago photographer and filmmaker known for his quirky portrayals of Chicago culture. After attending a private screening of Stamets' work-in-progress about Chicago's political campaigns, Moore decided it had potential as a Chicago novelty tape. MPI offered him a distribution contract, including a juicy $10,000 advance against royalties. The advance finishing funds came with one string attached: that Stamets include footage of the Daley campaigns in his film. Stamets' *Chicago Politics: A Theatre of Power*—an off-beat, humorous portrayal of politics and media—now sells on video for $12.00 wholesale, with a suggested retail price of $29.95. Moore's appearance at the June conference generated more than a dozen calls from independent producers, and he estimated that perhaps half have potential for striking an original production deal.

The hot topic of distribution carried over to another panel on festivals, distribution, and foreign markets, moderated by Academy Award-winning filmmaker Loretta Smith. Barbara Trent, a Los Angeles activist organizing against U.S. intervention in Central America, gave an important perspective to distribution to the education market. Trent recently coproduced *Destination Nicaragua*, about the 150,000 plus U.S. citizens who travel to Nicaragua each year, despite U.S. foreign policy condemning the Nicaraguan government. "We were shocked to find out that the world didn't want to see our film, even though it had won numerous awards at festivals," said Trent. She and coproducer David Kasper then took a hard look at their film, their markets, and potential distributors. They determined that the education market is "artificial." "When it costs seven dollars to reproduce a videotape, you have the situation where people can buy *Top Gun* for 12 dollars," said Trent. "We don't think schools will continue to pay $400 for a videotape much longer." But they also recognized a tremendous opportunity for "cross-fertilization," with media centers like Facets selling independent works on video for 50 dollars—selling them not only to record and video stores but to teachers and librarians as well. "Our response has been to knock the bottom out of our prices and be what we call a "real competitor," or "affordable," Trent continued. They decided to place the film with as many non-exclusive distributors as possible. *Destination Nicaragua* is contracted out to four educational distributors, one distributor for televison sales only, one retail video distributor, and one international distributor. In the first eight months of distribution, they sold 500 copies [for more details of Trent's distribution experience with *Destination Nicaragua*, see "The Video Trade," by Renee Tajima, on page 18 of this issue].

The novel approaches and self-help lessons outlined at the conference sparked lively discussions in and out of the conference rooms. But the independent media community also needs cohesive action in order to guarantee survival. Opening the doors for Chicago independent work was the focus of an Chicago organizing effort in 1983, and, four years later, it remains a primary item on the agenda. Media activists such as Gordon Quinn of Kartemquin Films and Scott Jacobs of Independent Programming Associates reported that they are still struggling to wedge a foot in the door of Chicago public broadcasting. As a result of a lively panel on public television at the conference, several producers agreed to meet the next day to continue their discussion with Andy Yocom, of public broadcasting station WTTW in Chicago. Although Yocom was unable to attend the follow-up session, the organizing spark had been struck, and those who met formed a committee to continue pushing for entry into public broadcasting. They have since written to Yocom requesting a meeting. According to Gladstone, he has agreed

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Albert Nader of the Travel Network recounts his success in marketing travel videos, despite dire predictions for his enterprise by industry insiders. (Left to right: Barbara Trent, the Empowerment Project; Sara Aspen, Homevision; moderator Milos Stehlik, Facets Multimedia; Nader; Darrel Moore, Maljack Productions, Inc.

Photo: Bill Stamets

to confer with them when they have a solid proposal to discuss.

Another outgrowth of that committee is a plan for a series, tentatively titled *Chicago Fire*, originally conceived as a proposal for WTTW. Now, according to the project's executive producer Alvin Goldstein, the proposal for a series of 10 to 13 programs will be sent to foundations, corporations, and other stations in the area. Goldstein, a participant on the public broadcasting panel, is former director of programming and production for public station KCTA-Minneapolis and was the executive producer of *Crisis to Crisis*, the PBS series of independent CPB-financed work in the early eighties. He and other organizers envision each program in the proposed series as a package of independent works on a particular theme. Goldstein said this would offer opportunities for as many as 120 different independent pieces to be aired in Chicago every year. With a projected airdate around Labor Day next year, the pilot under discussion will center on "work."

"I had just moved to Chicago, saw all this talent, and said, 'Let's make a show,'" Goldstein recalled. He is now involved in two projects which hold promise for Chicago mediamakers: *Chicago Fire* and a recent $5-million grant from the Benton Foundation Grant to the Univeristy of Chicago for the development of radio and television programs highlighting prestigious academic work at the university. The university has hired Louis Freedman, the first director of the CPB Program Fund, to oversee the project. "I feel that this is a great opportunity for CAFVN," said Gaylon Emerziam, an independent producer involved in the *Chicago Fire* coalition. Emerziam, a cofounder of Chicago's Women in the Director's Chair's annual film and video festival, is working on a treatment about the "working person's garb" for the *Chicago Fire* pilot. CAFVN's Gladstone agreed, hoping that the activity around *Chicago Fire* will inspire interest in CAFVN and expand the membership beyond its current 200. CAFVN would also like to see more participation in its activities from local media organizations. But, judging by CAFVN's last conference, the group will have to work hard to keep up with Chicago's active media scene.

Carrie Oviatt edits Scan, *the newsletter of the Center for New Television in Chicago.*

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A MARRIAGE THAT NEVER GOT STARTED: SEATTLE CABLE AND THE COMMUNITY

Ken Mochizuki

Representatives of minority organizations in Seattle are concerned about their future access to and involvement with cable television serving their communities. Last March Seattle Community Cablevision, Inc. (SeaCom), which held the cable TV franchise for Central Seattle serving the Central Area, Beacon Hill, and Rainier Valley, officially announced its intentions to sell the franchise to another company. At that time, community organizations, arguing that they were dissatisfied with unfulfilled promises by SeaCom, vowed to ensure that the next cable company will be held accountable to agreements made with the minority communities.

In 1982, the Central Area-Beacon Hill-Rainier Valley Cable Coalition was formed by nonprofit community organizations in the franchise area: Central Area Motivation Program (CAMP), El Centro de la Raza, International District Improvement Association (Inter-Im), Neighborhood House, and Operation Improvement. The Coalition agreed to use any benefits derived from their ownership in a cable television franchise to advance social and economic development in the franchise area, especially targeting the needs of low- and moderate-income residents. In cooperation with the City of Seattle, which awards cable franchises, the Coalition interviewed all bidders and subsequently supported SeaCom on the basis of commitments made by owner Bill Johnson: quality services at reasonable rates, minority and community-based ownership, community participation in the franchise, public access and facilities for production of local programs, a community share in the profits of the operations, and significant minority employment. SeaCom assured the Coalition of "access to the bank account and board room" as well as "direct input to the decision-making and decision-makers." The Coalition was granted a 10 percent share in the ownership of SeaCom.

During the period since SeaCom began operation in Seattle the Coalition found that the company experienced continual and substantial losses that eventually resulted in the franchise being offered for sale. In a statement issued in February, the Coalition pointed out that SeaCom was successful in promptly delivering services and keeping its subscription rates reasonable, but "the lack of good marketing and management" led to SeaCom's downfall. Johnson, whose company is based in St. Louis, denied that he is selling his cable franchise because of financial losses. Rather, he said, his company made the decision to consolidate its resources in St. Louis. Johnson explained that, with six cable television companies operating in the Seattle-King County area, "We can't grow. Everybody has projected losses."

The Coalition's also contended that SeaCom reneged on its assurances to the minority community. In their statement, they warned, "SeaCom is proposing to sell the franchise in a manner which would allow the purchaser to continue this history of noncompliance. The Coalition opposes any sale of the franchise until the community is assured that the principles established when this franchise was awarded will be adhered to." CAMP executive director Larry Gossett sees the troubles with SeaCom dating back to "when they signed on the dotted line. It's like a marriage that never got started." The Coalition's criticism of SeaCom emphasized that their primary concern is the loss of service and other related benefits to SeaCom subscribers and the franchise community, saying they have "patiently and deliberately" tried to privately encourage SeaCom to live up to its legal obligations—without success.

First, the Coalition charged, SeaCom's principal owner has done "everything in his power" to deny the Coalition any role in the management of the cable television franchise. When SeaCom proposed selling its franchise to Summit Communications, a non-minority-owned company, the Coalition pointed out that "SeaCom acquired this public license at least partly on the basis of minority status, and is now attempting to profit from the sale of that license to a non-minority person." Gossett added that, if Johnson had made public his intent to sell SeaCom, minority investors might have been able to organize a bid to acquire SeaCom. Inter-Im director Sue Taoka also observed, "There has been no responsibility back to the community. As minority stockholders, we didn't have any say in what was going on. Our 'having say' didn't materialize. Although we are stockholders, we haven't been privy to the books. It seems that, unless you have substantial dollars invested or own 51 percent of the stock, your money is at risk and you have no say." The Coalition urged the city not to approve any transfer of the franchise "until and unless SeaCom shows that it has made a reasonable good faith effort to seek out minority owners."

In violation of promises for community involvement, the Coalition maintained that SeaCom did not make "sincere efforts" to hold public meetings or seek community input after it sought community support to acquire the franchise. The city, the Coalition said, "should be prepared to enforce the franchise in this regard." In addition, the Coalition charged, SeaCom ignored minority contractors and built their cable system using an out-of-town contracter. When the sale to a company with no apparent minority ownership was proposed, the Coalition voiced concern that minority employment opportunities "may further be jeopardized." The Coalition's final criticism was that SeaCom "unquestionably failed to provide the level of equipment, studio time, or staff that it guaranteed in its proposal." The group also blamed the city "for this state of affairs in that it has refused, despite repeated written and verbal community requests, to do anything more than write letters requesting SeaCom to meet its legal obligations."

In response to the Coalition's indictment, Johnson responded, "It's easy to criticize, but it takes a lot more to get into a community and make a company work. We're an economic business, not a social agency. If the marriage is not working, quietly keep your mouth shut and get a divorce." Commenting on the Coalition's role in management of SeaCom, he said, "The CAMP party seems to be the only one complaining. I recognize that one vote from the Coalition doesn't count much. There are other stockholders, and they're happy." Johnson also argued that he has continually sought community input. He claims that he communicated with a community board of advisors throughout the year and conducted surveys among SeaCom subscribers. SeaCom never instituted a rate increase, and, he added, "We have received many letters that say they use our equipment regularly." To construct SeaCom's cable system, Johnson asserted that his company used in-house crews" supported by experienced outside contractors. "We hired all local crews," Johnson said. "There were blacks, Asians, and women working there. Two minority companies did the underground work. SeaCom didn't promise to do this, but we did more."

Speaking for the city, Debra Lewis, director of the Office for Cable Communications, said her office has the power to fine or revoke the franchise for a cable company that does not adhere to agreements made in the original franchise ordinance. "I would have liked them to do better, but fining them doesn't really accomplish everything," she commented. "SeaCom knew they weren't going to satisfy everybody, anyway. They just have to ensure cable access to everyone." City councilmember Norm Rice, who oversees city issues related to cable television observed, "I knew the SeaCom issue has been of concern, but I have not gotten any direct complaints. The complaints seem to go to the Office of Cable Communications, then back to the coalition, but never to the Council." Councilmember Sam Smith agreed, "We want minority owners and operators. Nothing has changed. But nothing

has come up before the Council's attention." Lewis said that while a franchise owner must comply with city affirmative action ordinances, the same ordinances do not apply to ownership.

At a meeting last July, the Seattle City Council approved the sale of SeaCom's system to Summit Communications. As a condition of the franchise, Summit agreed to several stipulations made by the city's Office of Cable Communications—including the establishment of an advisory community board and a community programming board, also an advisory body. Despite the Coalition's appeal for the city's intervention, the city decided that they couldn't legally hold up the sale.

Ed.'s note: This article is adapted from a longer report that appeared in the March 18, 1987 issue of the International Examiner.

Ken Mochizuki is a staff writer for the International Examiner *in Seattle.*

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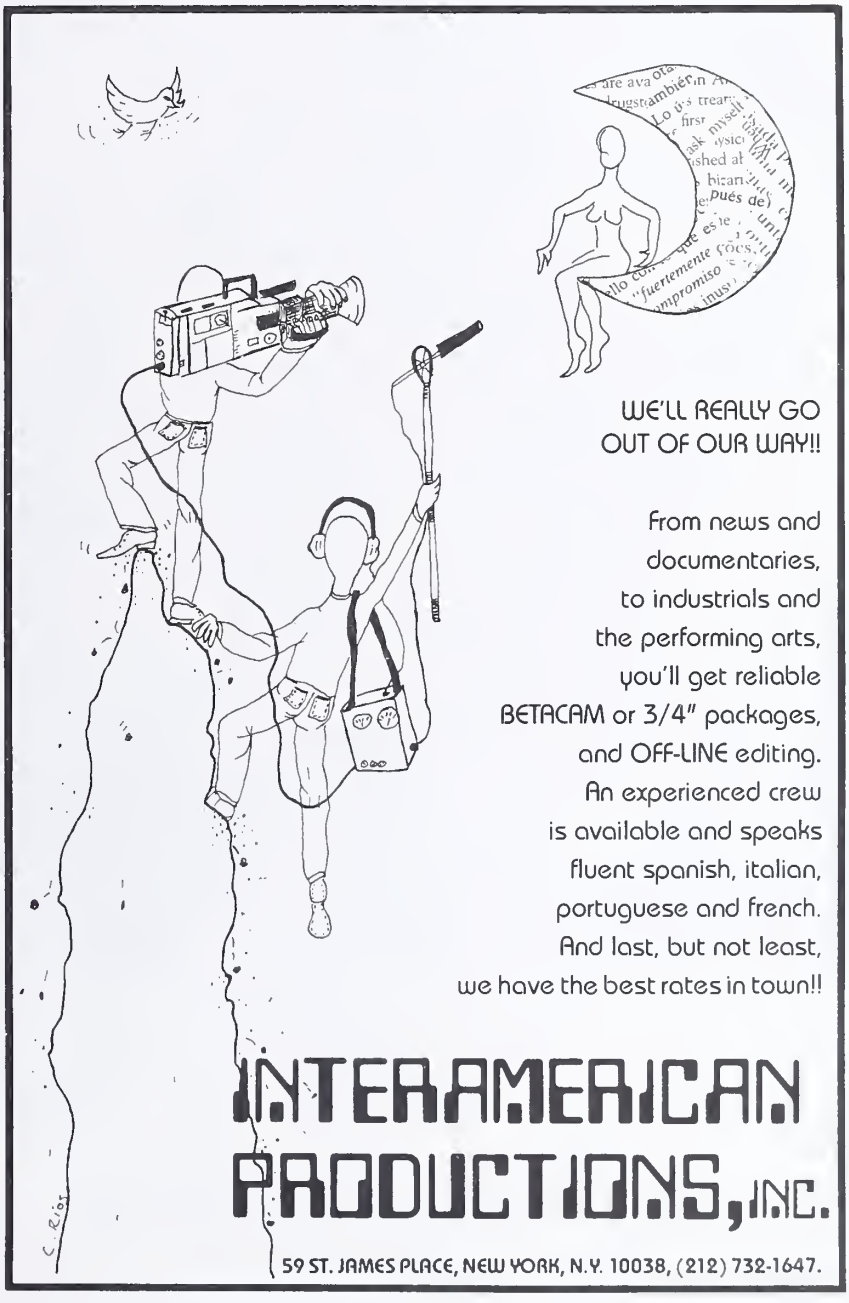
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OPEN REEL VIDEOTAPE RESTORATION

Tony Conrad

I. Application

The tape in question was a 1/2" Sony 60-minute reel, presumed to have been recorded in 1973. Upon playback, no image was produced. A professional transfer house had ascertained the tape to be irreparable, and it had been given up for lost by the maker, although the tape was the sole copy of a significant video art work (recorded on a black and white portapak).

A. Technical

When first put in play, the head of the tape showed a hint of image, but only momentarily. Presently the forward motion of the tape stalled, and when urged forward, it squeaked, stuttered, and stuck to the head drum. In fast-forward no image whatever appeared. The tape would move only for a few moments in fast-forward, then stuck fast. After several tries in fast-forward, the tape moved about 10 minutes, only to come jamming to a freeze against the head drum, causing permanent damage to a short section of the tape, which was soon abraded against the audio heads and other tape guides. Playback was on a Sony AV-8650 deck.

B. Analysis

Close examination and cleaning of the deck revealed that deposits of backing material and (to a lesser degree) of magnetic oxide coating were scraping off and clotting on the tape guides, head drum, and (especially) the skew post. This accumulation of deposits significantly impeded the tape motion, caused the tape to stick to the metal surfaces, and threatened the mechanical stability of the tape (because of possible stretching or other damage caused by the high tension on, and irregular motion of, the tape).

C. Procedure

By means of an unorthodox tape handling procedure (outlined in detail below), the tape was lubricated with silicone. Simultaneously, the worst of the flaking coating material on the tape was wiped off. Following the procedure, the tape played normally for 10 to 15 minutes at a time—sufficient to re-record the program on a master, for editing to a final restoration mastertape. Quality of the copy is comparable to playback quality when the tape was last seen here, about 1977.

After 10 or 15 minutes, the deposits seen originally again built up to a level sufficient to degrade the image quality, to cause image roll, to make the tape chatter and squeal, and finally to stop the tape. However, a thorough cleaning of the heads, head drum, tape guides, and so forth immediately restored the ability of the tape to run for another segment.

II. Commentary

The field is full of stories circulating about of video art masters that have deteriorated, that have "lost their signal." **Before these tapes are discarded, the procedure outlined here must be tried.** The tape treated in this instance was fully and dramatically recovered, the only damage being in handling prior to the lubrication of the tape. Given the age and diagnosis of this tape, it is conceivable that most, or even all, of the vintage videotapes which have "lost signal" (without having been erased by stray magnetic fields) have, in fact, only lost their binder and lubrication.

A. Tools

- head cleaning fluid
- head cleaning chamois
- Q-tips
- lint-free wipes (for photo or film use)
- strip of flannel or similar absorbent cloth, about 3/4" x 12"
- silicone lubricant spray (Union Carbide or equivalent: **not** with oil)
- Philips screw driver
- empty reel for 1/4" audiotape
- 45-rpm record, 7"
- gaffer's tape

B. Procedure

1. Clean hands; you will handle the videotape. Don't touch the middle of the oxide coating side; try to carry it by the edges at all times.
2. Remove plastic cover from the head drum. Do not open the drum itself. The cover lifts off on the Sony AV-8650. Use Philips screw driver to remove lower front shield (plastic) from the head drum. This will allow careful and complete cleaning of the tape path, without damage to the plastic parts.
3. Assemble a rig which will elevate the right-hand (take-up) reel about 9/16" above its usual seating. Do this by taping a 45-rpm 7" record together with an empty audiotape reel using gaffer's tape. They will fit on the take-up reel spindle, and the take-up reel for the videotape can ride atop them. It should then be very close to **level with the feed reel.** Use two or three small pieces of gaffer's tape, curled on themselves to make a loop, to affix the video take-up reel to the top of the audio reel and the 45.
4. Place the vintage tape on the feed spindle. It may now be wound directly across the take-up reel, without threading it past the heads. Spray enough silicone lubricant on a piece of the wipe material so that it is thoroughly dampened. The wipe will be folded over the tape, and the silicone-impregnated areas should contact both sides of the tape.
5. Let the wipe dry completely.
6. While holding the folded piece of wipe gently against both sides of the tape, in the space where it passes between the two reels, you will also need to hold the take-up reel gently, so it does not move (or jump) when the machine is put in "fast-forward."
7. Turn the machine to "fast-forward." The automatic cut-off switch (next to the audio head) will turn the machine off. Use this switch to control the movement of the tape.
8. **Very carefully and attentively** fast-forward the tape through the silicone wipe. Stop from time to time to change wipes when the wipe becomes dirtied with rubbed-off oxide and backing material. When stopping the tape, **be careful to brake the take-up reel** especially, and the feed reel, so that the tape does not snap itself or jerk itself into a crunched-up mess on the take-up reel. Should this happen, don't panic; stop and think about how to remove it gently.
9. After the tape has been wiped and cleaned to the end, run it back from the take-up reel to the feed reel, through the wipe. This time less material will be removed from the tape. Notice that more backing material is removed than oxide coating.
10. The tape is now ready to play.

C. Playing the Tape

1. Clean the tape path carefully, using Q-tips and head cleaning fluid. Clean the heads. Use a strip of flannel to clean the two posts on either side of the head drum: put cleaning fluid on the cloth, wrap it around the post, and pull the cloth back and forth in a shoe-shine motion to burnish. The posts collect the backing material and get more than their share of dirt build-up.
2. Play the tape. When it begins to stall, chatter, or play a degraded or unstable image, stop immediately to re-clean the machine as above.
3. Remove the tape from the head drum, and pull it far enough out that it will not be accidentally wiped or dripped with cleaning fluid. Make sure to remember to remove the tape from the capstan and pinch roller, since you will want to put the machine in "play" to clean the heads. When the machine is in "play," you will have to hold the take-up reel from moving, and use the automatic cut-off switch to activate the mechanism. Turn the function switch back to "stop," when you're done.
4. After cleaning, rethread the tape and start playing again. Make sure to double-check the tape threading path before putting the machine in "play," since (with the covers removed) the tape may tend to fall below the guides which direct it around the head drum properly.

D. General Precautions

1. Practice this whole procedure with a scratch tape before you risk a valuable original.
2. Don't lean on the metal head drum cover.
3. Maintain an attentive outlook throughout.
4. Always **check for slack in the tape** before putting the machine in motion.

Tony Conrad is an artist who teaches at the State University of New York/Buffalo.

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PHOTO BY WILLIAM DUKE

THE HALF OPEN DOOR

Channel Four and Independent Production in the U.K.

Alison Butler

A television channel which broadcasts films by Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen, Jean-Luc Godard and Ousmane Sembene, which supports a number of regionally-based, worker-controlled, nonprofit distributing workshops engaged in explicitly progressive audio-visual production and education, which commissions series by and for women and black and Asian people.... This is the stuff of dreams for most radical cultural activists in the U.S. In Britain, Channel Four has made this a reality, and has, as a result, earned an international reputation as the model for progressive broadcasting. However, this view overlooks a number of crucial factors: the Channel's historical, institutional specificity; its many limitations; the negative as well as positive effects it has had on the independent sector in the U.K.; and, in the current political climate, the fragility of its progressive stance.

Channel Four was brought into existence through a careful balancing of different cultural, political, and financial interests. The groundwork behind the founding of the U.K.'s fourth television channel was carried out by a government committee chaired by Lord Annan. The committee's final report in 1977 recommended that the fourth channel should be controlled by a new, independent "Open Broadcasting Authority," funded from a range of sources. This channel would act as a publisher of a variety of voices rather than a monolithic institution, and the famous "balance and objectivity" of British broadcasting would be redefined as balance across the schedule to allow previously marginalized views to be represented.

In 1979, the first term of Britain's culturally and economically repressive Conservative government under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher began. Many of Annan's recommendations for the new channel—including its commitment to innovation and experiment—were retained, but the notion of the Open Broadcasting Authority was rejected. Instead, the new channel was placed under the control of the existing Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), which already controlled Britain's only commercial channel, ITV. While this ensured a steady source of financing in the form of a levy on the advertising revenues of the companies that make up ITV (a subscription payment, calculated as a percentage of the ITV companies' net advertising revenues, which relates to—but last year was slightly less than—the revenue generated by the ITV companies' sale of advertising time on Channel Four), it also meant that the minority audiences at which much of the Channel's output was to be aimed were to be served at the tolerance of the Channel's commercial paymaster.

Although this compromise has allowed spaces in the schedule for the airing of more intelligent and innovative programming than is usually seen on television, both the radicalism—in form and content—of the programs and the percentage of programming provided by the independent sector have been widely exaggerated. "Independents"—as signifying the neo-Griersonian and experimental/avant-garde traditions—are generally kept safely boxed into the *Eleventh Hour* and *People to People* slots, programmed under the aegis of commissioning editor for independent film and video Alan Fountain, with almost no access to peak viewing time. The percentage of productions supplied by genuinely independent companies, as distinct from the ITV companies, has dropped from 40 percent in the early days of the Channel to around 25 percent. Of the 300 independent companies, 12 produce about half of all the material, and many have become multi-million pound operations. The number of women and black people involved in production has remained virtually the same as before the Channel started broadcasting.

One of the effects of the Channel's accountability to the IBA (and through that to the government, to which the IBA is directly answerable) has been a steady pressure—sometimes internalized or anticipated as well as directly manifested—to perform according to the conventional criteria of broadcast television. There have been a growing number of instances of censorship, among them one of the earliest and most unpleasantly ironic was the banning by the IBA of a program in the highly intelligent cinema series *Visions*, titled *Brazil: Cinema, Sex and the Generals*, on the grounds that the program contained a reference to its having been censored by the IBA. More alarming, however, was the discontinuation of this series altogether by the Channel itself shortly afterward. *Visions* was the only British cinema program ever to deal with nondominant cinemas from nondominant perspectives. It was surprisingly well-made considering its tight budget, and its ratings held up well against expectations, despite poor scheduling by the programmers. (For viewers, like me, who particularly wanted to watch *Visions*, the series was sometimes very difficult to track down. The first series of 15 programs went out irregularly; the second series consisted of six one-hour documentaries which aired weekly; the third series consisted of monthly late-evening magazine programs—as the makers originally wanted—but was switched to a nine o'clock slot halfway through the series.) Nevertheless, the reason given for the scrapping of the series was that it wasn't "popular." In this context, "popular" signals something which has less to do with audiences than with the formats and conventions of dominant television.

While this is only one instance of the Channel's failure to meet expectations fostered by its original brief, it is indicative of the direction in which the Channel is moving. When Channel Four started broadcasting in November 1982, it was savaged by the right-wing press, under headlines like "Channel Bore." The Channel responded to this within its first year by increasingly conforming to established patterns in television, with a rising number of soap operas, light entertainment programs, magazine series, and "talking-heads" documentaries. The pressure to provide "balanced" and "popular" programs has been inscribed in the commissioning process and effectively passed on to independent producers who must either conform or forgo the chance of a commission. Thus, the delicate equilibrium by which the Channel's commitment to new and challenging production and programming is maintained remains structurally vulnerable to the destructive interventions of both market interests and the state.

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A more enduring success, at least in organizational terms, has been the recognition given to the film and video workshop movement by the Channel under the terms of the ACTT Workshop Declaration. The workshops were not invented by Channel Four—far from it; the earliest workshops, such as Cinema Action and Amber Films, were founded in the late sixties—but the advent of the Channel made a number of them economically viable for the first time in their history. Until 1982 the workshops survived by the skin of their teeth, on donations, tiny grants from state arts funding bodies, and the unpaid commitment of their members. Collectively constituted and run, they maintained close links with labor and left politics and made films that addressed issues within workers' and the women's movements. From radical working practices they evolved the principle of production for "use



Joseph Charles and Annie Domingo discuss conflicting views in *The Passion of Remembrance*, directed in 1986 by Maureen Blackwood and Isaac Julien, Sankofa Film/Video's groundbreaking film made for Channel Four.

Courtesy Sankofa

value" rather than "exchange value" on the market and a commitment to formal innovation as the crucial condition for breaking the stranglehold of dominant groups on the media and, in a wider sense, on the social imagination. They worked closely with the subjects of their films and screened their own films and others to local and specialized audiences. Working across industrial categories, their activities included training, production, distribution, and exhibition. Out of this, the notion of "integrated practice" emerged as a cornerstone of socially conceptualized audio-visual work.

Channel Four's statutory commitment to "encourage innovation and experiment in the form and content of programs" made it an obvious target for the impoverished workshop sector, but access to airtime and funds was not easily gained. In the U.K. theatrically exhibited and broadcast film and video are tightly unionized, largely by the main media union, the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians (ACTT). A union with something of the flavor of the old craft guilds, the ACTT has, for many years, played a major gate-keeping role in the industry. Workshop producers, with their unusual working practices and aims, were among those resolutely kept out. After much careful negotiation between the ACTT, the independents (represented by the Independent Filmmakers' Association), Channel Four, and the main state arts and film funding bodies, the Workshop Declaration was drawn up. This enabled workshops franchised by the union and funded by the Channel and the British Film Institute to work professionally within the film and television industries without infringing union regulations or abandoning their self-managed, collective working practices. For the first time, members of the workshops that had been awarded franchises were able to work with the security of continuous paid employment. The Declaration, as published by the ACTT in 1984, is introduced with the statement that "the Union believes that the Declaration marks a huge stride forward in creating the continuity which is vital to build a powerful network of production groups with enough resources to make a real impact on our industry, media and society."

The extent of the "real impact," however, has not been as great as this rhetoric might lead one to suppose. The portion of the Channel's funds allocated to the workshops in revenue and commissions is actually tiny—one percent of the total program budget. Grants are made through the Independent Film and Video Department and their program slots are the only ones that screen the product of the workshops. There are only a small number of franchised workshops, and some, such as the Leeds Animation Workshop (a feminist group) receive less than sterling 40,000 as their annual budget. The major impact has been on the independent sector itself, which, after a period of expansion and professionalization, has reached the limits of possible growth within the present ecology without by any means exhausting its potential. As a result, the sector has become crudely divided, between the "haves" and the "have-nots" and is now, perhaps paradoxically, more closed than ever to newcomers. A friend who has been active in the sector almost since its first days now refers to it as "the sect."

Even more problematic is the drastic reorientation of independent work that the opportunities and demands of production for Channel Four have effected by shifting its center from one institution (16mm cinema) to another (television), thus affecting working practices, aesthetic strategies, and relationships with audiences. The Declaration's exclusive concentration on contractural matters and the subsequent engagement of many sector activists in the syndicalist micro-politics of the union have effectively meant that wider cultural-political concerns have been relegated to the margins of the debate. Anxiety over retaining the level of funding necessary for a franchise (usually awarded for a three-year period) and proving their worth in a professional context, combined with the current populism and concern with "accessibility" on the British left, have pressured many workshops into working as production houses, churning out conventional-looking productions with traditional socially-concerned perspectives as fast as possible. This process of apparent institutionalization is not a straightforward result of the workshops' relationship with the funding bodies (Channel Four and the British Film Institute), but an indication of the convergence of a number of forces in the cultural space they occupy, including a substantial retrenchment of the cultural left in the U.K. Fear of obsolescence in the face of rapid and irreversible social, political, and technological change has led to a tendency across the entire spectrum of left-wing activism to abandon the interest in theory and experiment that characterized the seventies and to



John Hurt ponders nonlinear narratives, the perfect landscape, and the coal miners' strike in Cinema Action's fiction feature *Rocinante*, produced by Gustav Lamche, written and directed by Ann and Eduardo Guedes.

Courtesy Cinema Action

chase, rather than attempt to create, cultural trends. Increasingly, the workshop sector is distancing itself from the notion of a Godardian, Brechtian cinema of social research and aesthetic experiment which was so important in its early days, concentrating instead on reaching mass audiences and accessing new markets. As in several regions—Tyneside and the West Midlands—the better-funded workshops and associated groups have formed local media consortia with regional development plans, while notions like working with audiences and integrated practice have been displaced by the terminology of industrial combines: marketing and vertical integration.

There are notable exceptions to this generalization, however. Cinema Action, whose exceptional first fiction film *Rocinante* has recently been completed, have continued to pursue aesthetically experimental and politically subtle representational strategies. The black workshops, few in number but of considerable cultural importance, have proved energetic and innovative entrants into an area where black people are grossly underrepresented. As black cultural politics question the entire history and philosophy of western society, and as the experiences of black people incline them to take very little for granted—except perhaps injustice—workshops like the Black Audio Film Collective and Sankofa have kept theoretical and aesthetic questions addressed to the relationship between the social and the cultural high on their agendas. This conjuncture has produced not only ground-breaking films (Sankofa's *The Passion of Remembrance* and Black Audio's *Handsworth Songs*) but also heated debate around the structures and practices of arts and media institutions, in addition to a potentially very productive interest in the spheres of criticism and exhibition as exemplified by the Third Cinema Conference at the 1986 Edinburgh Film Festival [see Kobena Mercer's "Third Cinema at Edinburgh: Reflections on a Pioneering Event," in the April 1987 issue of *The Independent*].

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The arrival of Channel Four has turned out to be the axis of fundamental shifts in the British independent sector—shifts that have involved a substantial de facto redefinition of the slippery term "independent." As the regional media consortia shape up to a size and strength that will enable them to rival some of the poorer ITV companies, it will be interesting to see on whose terms, and at what cost, their passage through the looking glass and into mainstream television might be accomplished.

Meanwhile, two dominant trends in the sector can be identified by their attitudes to the approach of deregulation. Following the government-commissioned Peacock Report, the product of a review of the financing of British public service broadcasting, it seems likely that in the not-too-distant future the BBC channels and ITV will be required to buy a quota of out-of-house product (the figure under discussion is 25 percent). It is also possible that Channel Four will begin to sell its own advertising (i.e., effective privatization). Members of some independent production companies, rather than workshops, largely surviving hand-to-mouth on Channel Four commissions represent one vocal tendency in this restructuring. Grouped around the Independent Programme Producers' Association, they have formed the 25% Campaign in favor of changes in line with the new government policy but carefully managed and regulated to avoid both massive lay-offs of media workers and the influx of multinational media magnates like Rupert Murdoch and Robert Maxwell, who have already done so much to make the British press the most reactionary, disinformative, and trivializing in Western Europe.

In a steady stream of articles in the national and trade press, members of the 25% Campaign are currently advancing more and more elaborate arguments as to how this might be accomplished. It's all too likely, however, that their intricacies will ultimately be crushed by the juggernaut of monetarist libertarianism. The argument is, after all, structured first and foremost around cost-effectiveness. The subsequent conversion of unionized employees into competitive entrepreneurs would be entirely in line with Thatcherite anti-union policies. Finally, it's worth remembering that the audiences which Channel Four at its most innovative aims to reach comprise those most disaffected by the present government (for example, blacks, intellectuals, the left, the unemployed), whereas the ruling ideology is, as the example of the press in the U.K. shows, a major beneficiary of the

blandly cretinous product of media multinationals. One thing is clear: untrammelled deregulation would not result in the widespread replication of the Channel Four model. It would, in fact, ensure foreclosure on the Channel's innovative policies and the aspirations they represent. Mindful of this, Channel Four chief executive Jeremy Isaacs (whose immanent departure in 1988 will be a crucial moment for the Channel) has described the advocates of deregulation as "as ambitious a bunch of mercenaries as ever held up a gravy train." On the other side of the divide, those members of the independent sector who have taken unionization very much to heart are firmly resisting the arguments of both the government and the 25% Campaign, on the grounds that lending support to changes likely to result in job losses reneges completely on the independent film movement's socialist origins.

Channel Four's unique achievements in broadcasting, which must not be underestimated despite the many criticisms that can be made, are not, as some have argued, *directly* accrued from the new input that has been made by independent producers. Rather, the Channel has been enabled, by its mediated relationship with commercial television and its adaptation of selected aspects of public service broadcasting, to open a space for innovation and experiment, and the independent sector has been the beneficiary of this. Structural and financial changes effected in the cause of financial rationalization, such as Channel Four selling its own advertising time, are likely to result in changes in the original constitution of the Channel which might abolish its last protection against outright commercialism. Viewed in historical terms, Channel Four represents a crossroads in British broadcasting, a transition away from the public service broadcasting but not, at its best, towards a free market model. Its distinction from both forms rests on the notions of audience within which it operates: while retaining the BBC's concern with social responsibility, it has rejected its traditional address to a homogeneous audience and its unifying role as a powerful centralized establishment in favor of a pluralist address to the many different interest groups that make up contemporary society. At the same time, it has avoided the direct pressure of advertisers that would result in an equally homogenizing address (to the lowest common denominator of interest) in order to maximize potential markets for the products advertised. This way of conceptualizing television audiences is perhaps the single most important factor determining the Channel's development of varied and high-quality programs and programming. And its survival depends, ultimately, on the retention of certain structural and ideological factors attendant on the institution of public service broadcasting, stemming from the belief that culture and communications are too important to be placed in the control of the highest bidder—which is what deregulation would do.

In the midst of the debate about how best the independent sector might advance through the funding and distribution bottleneck currently restricting further growth, a number of vital questions seem to have gotten lost. Why does no one talk about counter-television aesthetics the way counter-cinema used to be talked of? Is television—with its rigid formats, its relentless pace and its rigorous lack of depth—intrinsically unsuitable for the representation of complexities, or has the independent sector simply stopped worrying and learned to love the (money) box?

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Black workshops, such as the Black Audio Film Collective, producer of Handsworth Songs, are a lively and significant force within the independent sector in Britain.

Courtesy Black Audio Collective

THE VIDEO TRADE

Part 1: The Distributors

Renee Tajima

In the world of independent video distribution, the dichotomy between art and commerce not only makes for meaty philosophical debate, but, to a great degree, governs the market. Consider these two extremes: selling video as art objects versus mass home video reproduction. The gallery model has proved viable for one-of-a-kind installation pieces like Nam June Paik's *Video Flag Y*, bought by the Chase Manhattan Bank. But single channel works are another story. In the seventies a few art galleries attempted to sell limited edition videotapes, but these ventures never panned out. The Modern Visual Communications electronic gallery in Los Angeles, which opened last year, has already folded due to financial problems. It now distributes tapes as a video label to retail stores and through mail order. Videomaker Gary Hill points out, "It's ridiculous to sell video as a one-of-a-kind work, because it's reproducible." As always, philosophical questions follow close behind the practical. "It's also a false consciousness," Hill continues, "if you make only one so it's worth more. Making art that's communicative, you should try to get it out there. The bottom line is art, not merchandise."

The other extreme is mass-marketing in the form of home video: where tapes are retailed in a variety of ways, ranging from mail-order catalogues to stores. VCR sales have changed the face of the videò landscape during the 1980s, continually reshaping the video environment in new configurations that most videomakers will have to contend with sooner or later. Still a relatively new phenomenon, especially for independent work, the results aren't in, but there is as much speculation about the potential downside of this distribution system as there is hype about its mass audience potential. Robin O'Hare, who heads the Kitchen's distribution service which recently cut a distribution deal with ex-Monkee Mike Nesmith's home video company, Pacific Arts, sees the home market as the future for distibution in the U.S. Some of the most creative new ideas in the nonprofit video distribution scene have been in 1/2" marketing, including the Pacific Arts-Kitchen series—featuring Robert Wilson's *Stations*, Zbigniew Rybczynski's *Anthology*, and *The Kitchen Presents Two Moon July*—Video Data Bank's *What Does She Want?* subscription series, and low-cost, grassroots distribution of political media. According to Paul Aihara, who heads the National Asian American Telecommunication Association's new video distribution program, Crosscurrents Media, 84 percent of NAATA's recent sales and rentals have been VHS tapes.



Why Do Things Get in a Muddle? (Come on Petunia) **is a tape videomaker Gary Hill would like to see screened to a broader market than has been cultivated by his distributors.**

Photo: Richard Gummere

But is it realistic to think a Video Shack customer will pass up multi-million dollar blockbusters for an anthology of tapes by Zbigniew Rybczynski? Or that Video Shack will even give the tape shelf space at all? And if 1/2" distribution does become the norm, what will the impact be on the price structure for video art's mainstay: 3/4" distribution? Writer and videomaker Martha Rosler takes her misgivings a step further, asking what the ideological effect will be on the work itself when it is assimilated into a mass market? These are questions in the minds of many video producers (and distributors and exhibitors, too) in a time when home video is still only one form of distribution for tapes that blur the boundaries between art and mass media. Most distribution methods that are currently applied to video are variations on other, more established strategies: 16mm educational film marketing, touring packages, public television, alternative record distribution, and the like. But, by far, the distributors most active in getting video to the public have been nonprofit organizations involved in promoting video art: Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), the Video Data Bank, and the Kitchen, all largely catering to educational and cultural institutions—schools, museums, galleries, libraries, media art centers—and, to some degree, television programmers.

This and a second article will give an overview of independent video distribution in the U.S., concentrating on patterns of non-broadcast rentals and sales and the relationships between producers and distributors. It's important to remember that video distribution is still a young institution—the pioneering EAI distribution service is only 14 years old—and that much of the action takes place outside of the U.S. Canada, for example, has an older, more established, and perhaps more sophisticated distribution history, and many U.S. videomakers have found European art institutions and buyers more receptive to their work than those in their homeland. I would also like to acknowledge and recommend the excellent coverage of video distribution in the Spring 1987 issue of *Media Arts*, published in conjunction with the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers' conference on distribution that took place in New York City last June.

Unlike film distribution, where a single company will attempt to circulate its titles in a variety of markets, nonprofit video organizations with distribution components reflect the specific orientation and even the origins of those organizations. For instance, the Video Data Bank began as a project at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a large part of their collection consists of interviews with U.S. artists. The primary venue for these tapes are classrooms and lecture halls in art schools and universities. Subsequently, the Data Bank extended their collection to include videotapes *by* artists, but their ties to educational institutions remain strong. The Kitchen, on the other hand, was founded as an alternative space for performance, new music, dance, and video, and today their video list still favors work associated with avant-garde art movements of the last few





Antonio Muntadas produced *Slogans* so that it could be programmed in excerpts—or "sold by the inch."

Courtesy videomaker

decades. The first tapes handled by EAI, founded by gallery owner Howard Wise, were notably eclectic, with some documentaries alongside the recorded results of electronic experiments and a number of formalist and conceptual art tapes. EAI remains a primary source for the videotapes by people credited with pioneering work in art video as well as documentary video—Skip Blumberg, Joan Jonas, Nam June Paik, George Stoney, the TVTV collective, Steina and Woody Vasulka, and others.

Nevertheless, there is considerable overlap between these collections and, in some cases, the work circulated by other organizations and in travelling video exhibitions. An important result of these developments is that, in video distribution, non-exclusive contracts are the rule—in contrast to filmmakers' arrangements with their distributors. Video distributors are not in a position to demand exclusivity because they cannot deliver high enough returns or exposure. Moreover, the video art distribution scene is relatively noncompetitive and cooperative. Distributors and producers alike are aware that they're in the same boat, since income from rentals and sales of any single tape is insignificant. Says videomaker Antonio Muntadas of his distributors EAI and the Data Bank, "They're not involved in it as a business. They're nonprofit; they like the work, and that's why they do it."

Artists' videotapes, however, are largely marketed based on the reputation and aesthetic interests of the maker, rather than as individual works. In general, established artists with a body of work have an edge over those who have produced a single tape. In the rare instances when video art is shown on broadcast television or appears in home video outlets, the tapes are often by many of the same artists who have achieved visibility, in part anyway, because their work is available and promoted through the main video distributors. A further complicating factor is added by the curatorial and programming activities of video distribution personnel, so that festival programs and other public screenings are sometimes curated by people who work in video distribution. Artists with one or two tapes to their name may find the going rough in this scheme. Although non-exclusive contracts make it theoretically possible for a producer to place their work with all the distributors that exist, there are still only a handful of video distributors.

The advantage of non-exclusive contracts, however, is that a producer who can attract the interest of distributors can maximize exhibition opportunities by assigning their work to several. For example, all of Gary Hill's tapes in circulation are carried by EAI and the Kitchen; the Museum of Modern Art Circulating Film and Video Library distributes a number of his works, but not his more recent *Why Do Things Get in a Muddle? (Come on Petunia)* and *URA ARU (the backside exists)*. Several tapes—the two aforementioned and *Videograms*—have been included in the Whitney Museum of American Art's Biennial exhibitions and are, therefore, in the American Federation for the Arts' Biennial touring shows. Hill also has tapes at Monte Video in Amsterdam and Scan Gallery in Tokyo. The list of Martha Rosler's distributors is similarly diverse, with all her tapes at the Data Bank and EAI, and several earlier works—*Semiotics of the Kitchen*, *Losing: A Conversation with the Parents*, and *Vital Statistics of a Citizen, Simply Obtained*—at the Kitchen. She, too, has tapes in AFA Biennial packages: *A Simple Case for Torture, or How To at Sleep at Night* and *If It's Too Bad To Be True, It Could Be Disinformation*. *Torture* is also circulated in a touring show distributed by the New England Foundation for the Arts. Another tape, *Martha Rosler Reads Vogue*, was produced as part of the *Paper Tiger TV* cable TV series and is handled by both Paper Tiger and the Data Bank. In Canada, her distributors include Art Metropole, Video Inn, and Women in Focus, which carries *Semiotics*, *Losing*, *Vital Statistics*, as well as *The East Is Red, the West Is Bending*. Groupe d'Intervention Video in Montréal distributes a French dub of *Vital Statistics*. And four of her tapes are handled by Circles, a feminist distibution company in London. Well-known video artists, such as Bill Viola, seem to have tapes on every distributor's list and can even command different price structures for various markets and formats. Few producers I spoke to worried about self-competition in the multi-distributor scheme. As they see it, more distributors mean more exposure.

For tapes with multiple-market appeal—for example, those that appeal to museum curators and art school teachers but might also fit in cultural studies or social science curricula—it makes sense to package a distribution plan that covers each area. Rosler reaches both the art exhibition and education worlds in the U.S. through EAI, the Data Bank, the Kitchen, AFA, and the New England Foundation, benefiting particularly from the practices employed by the former two which publish catalogues, program screenings, and act as curatorial consultants. Her *Paper Tiger* tape goes out to public access and community groups through *Paper Tiger TV*'s contacts, and the foreign feminist distributors reach feminist groups, as well as Canadian and European markets. Only in the case of the Women in Focus' distribution is self-competition a problem, since they charge far lower rates. Rosler is considering the possibility of asking them to limit their territory.

Nonmedia or affiliated resources can be brought into the distribution package, depending on the material. New York videomaker James Byrne produces dance/video collaborations that require special promotion to reach both the art and dance audiences. When Minneapolis-based documentarian Randy Croce produced the tape *The Drum Is the Heart* with a Native American audience in mind, he cooperated with the Media Department of the Blackfeet Tribe in his distribution efforts. With grants from the Montana

VIDEO POWER

When Barabara Trent and David Kasper completed their documentary *Destination Nicaragua*, they shopped it around to the usual suspects among social issue media distributors. But they found the performance records of these organizations unacceptable: distributors asked for exclusive rights but could only project a handful of sales per year. "The problem," says Trent, "is their only market is the left or is very limited, and they still have a $300 price tag for video." So Kasper and Trent became their own agents, negotiating and receiving nonexclusive contracts with 10 distributors. Their decentralized distribution package for *Destination Nicaragua* comprised different kinds of distributors and markets—both traditional and nontraditional—including the Public Interest Video Network, the Central Educational Network, the international distributor Film Options, and Rhino Records, a music distributor that also handles home video. The producers gave exclusivity in particular markets only to those distributors with good enough track records to merit it. They signed three- to five-year contracts, but with stipulations tied to annual performance standards. Because they wanted their tape to be used for political organizing, the producers were firmly committed to keeping prices affordable and cooperating with organizing groups. Trent considers the relatively high prices for video charged by some documentary distributors to be "another form of censorship," keeping the information from its intended audience.

Decentralized distribution of the tape worked, and 800 copies were sold in the first 18 months. It has been broadcast on 180 college and university stations and 20 public television stations. The success of *Destination Nicaragua* led to the formation of the Empowerment Project, with about 30 video- and filmmakers participating. In an effort to achieve maximum exposure for progressive, hard-to-place documentaries, the Empowerment Project acts as a kind of agent for the producer, working cooperatively to negotiate contracts based on projected performance. As an agent, the Project's fee is 20 percent of distribution royalties. They also provide access to their low-cost, soon-to-be-expanded postproduction facility MATE (Media Activists Tools Endowment)—two editing suites with interformat editing in 3/4" and 1/2", time code and window dubbing, computer graphics, stereo mixing and equalizing, and titling.

Pamela Cohen is one of the producers who has worked with the Empowerment Project on the distribution of her documentary *Dateline: San Salvador*. When the tape was completed in November 1986, Cohen decided to take the self-distribution route. Although self-distribution is labor intensive, Cohen knew her information on the civil war in El Salvador would become dated and wanted to get the tape out as quickly and widely as possible. She opened it at the Roxie Theater in San Francisco and EZTV in Los Angeles, using grassroots organizing methods to reach audiences—primarily Central America solidarity groups and schools. Through the Empowerment Project, she then signed on with distributors in a number of markets, including the Educational Film and Video Project in Berkeley, primarily an anti-nuclear distributor; Teacher's Discovery, which distributes mostly to high schools; the Campus Network for closed-circuit in universities; Facets Video, the mail-order home video outlet in Chicago; and Film Options International. *Dateline* is also part of a documentary package—which also includes *Destination Nicaragua*; *Vacation Nicaragua*, by Anita Clearfield and Geoffrey Leighton, and *In the Shadow of War*, by Wolf Tirado and Jackie Reiter—that has been offered to PBS stations through two regional program services, the Central Educational Network and the Pacific Mountain Network. Cohen has the same concerns about video pricing as producers Trent and Kaspar. When distributing her previous film, *In the Name of Democracy*, Cohen says, "I was more protective of it, and I'm more open with *Dateline*. I'd rather get it out there. It doesn't pay politically or financially to be tight with it."

The Empowerment Project, 13107 Venice Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90066; (213) 390-9858.

RT



The publicity flyer for *Dateline: San Salvador* folds over neatly as a videocassette box cover.

Design: Sheila Minsky



UCVideo's collection of Native American video includes Randy Croce's new documentary *Clouded Land*.

Courtesy videomaker

Committee for the Humanities, they worked together on promotion. Croce's new tape, *Clouded Land*, is intended for a general audience. Given that, he decided to distribute through UCVideo in Minneapolis, because of its contacts with festivals, television stations, and a broader market. *Clouded Land* has already been accepted for broadcast by three regional public television stations.

Video that is regarded as "art" and video that concentrates on conveying information (topical documentaries, conventional narratives, and some animation) are marketed in much different ways, although these market distinctions are beginning to become less rigid. Because artists' videotapes more often entail formal innovation and unusual structures, video art has a much more limited market, and there are fewer distributors that handle these kinds of tapes. Informational videos, on the other hand, circulate within a different set of economies and are able to capitalize on the established 16mm educational film market—and 16mm film distributors have gotten into the video act. In these case, the emphasis lies not on the medium—film or video—but on subject matter. Icarus, Cinema Guild, Women Make Movies, Third World Newsreel, and the Black Filmmakers Foundation are a few of the social issue distributors that now carry video titles. Their collections are largely topical or reflect the particular cultural perspective of the maker, defined by region, race, gender, etc. But these distributors have only begun to cross over into more stylistically nonconventional works—like Sherry Millner's *Scenes from the Microwar* and *Womb with a View*, distributed by Women Make Movies—and face the challenge of encouraging the audiences they already reach to change the way they look at media. In its new catalogue, WMM cross-indexes the work from its video art collection in issue-related categories. For example, *Womb with a View* is also listed under "Birth and Parenting," and Vanalyn Green's *Trick or Drink* appears in the health issues listing. The catalogue descriptions speak to the subject matter but do not explicitly refer to the experimental style of the tapes. Will users be misled by the social issue marketing? According to WMM executive director Debra Zimmerman, some users complain that the tapes are too arty, while others are captivated by the new stylistic approach. "It does make me nervous sometimes," she admits.

For these distributors, most of the work they handle that originated on video is rented or sold in the 3/4" format. Third World Newsreel and Women Make Movies have moved cautiously into 1/2" distribution, using it to give a second life to older films or tapes. But some producers and distributors, such as the Empowerment Project in Los Angeles, believe that early market saturation with low-cost tapes produces better results. Empowerment Project directors David Kasper and Barbara Trent sold 800 copies of their *Destination Nicaragua* using a number of distributors and keeping prices low.

The successful integration of independent video into the home video market may depend on its ability to create new audiences. According to Arthur Tsuchiya, program associate for the Media Program of the New York State Council on the Arts, some artists are looking at alternative methods of getting their work to VCR owners, such as health food stores or the fitness centers. John Giorno, who established a record distribution network with his poetry recordings, now distributes Giorno Video Packs, which he describes as "video compilations" of highly produced, finished works such as rock videos or clips from Howard Brookner's documentary on Robert Wilson's *Civil Wars*. Giorno markets to a general audience that is interested in off-beat art, but may not be familiar with the media arts universe. Bookstores seem natural outlets for 1/2" tapes. Nancy Barton, the manager of the Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) bookstore, collaborated with the Santa Monica video store Vidiots to start a collection. LACE now carries tapes and films on tape that rent for three dollars per day, and sell at prices from $29 to $69 (with discounts to members). Pamela Cohen, who distributes *Dateline: San Salvador* in cooperation with the Empowerment Project, points out that video distribution to community groups is almost exclusively VHS. People who could not have had easy access to video equipment before can now gather at house meetings—or almost anywhere with a 1/2" system—to screen political videos.

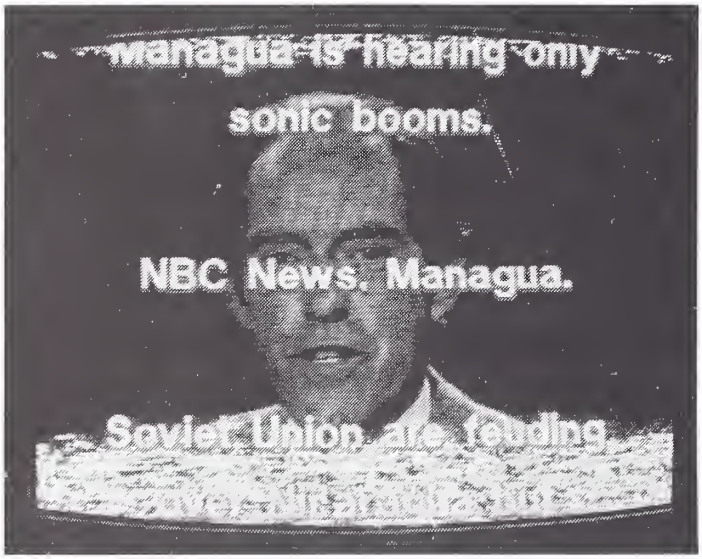
Because there are more videotapes produced than the existing video distributors can currently handle, some videomakers opt for self-distribution. Chicago-based producer Steve Roszell was unable to find a distributor for his works *Writing on Water* and *Other Prisoners*, two quirky and fascinating documentaries produced in his home state of Kentucky. "It seems like the work isn't clearly enough of anything to market it," says Roszell. *Other Prisoners*, in particular, has been a tough sell—a documentary that looks inside a Kentucky state penitentiary in which both the prisoners and guards seem to be inmates of the isolated prison world. Roszell thinks social issue distributors are wary of its perspective—one that does not have "a clearly liberal tone." He tells of one distributor who liked the tape, "but didn't want to have to be the one to introduce it to anyone," because of possible political implications.

After shopping the tapes unsuccessfully to a number of distributors, Roszell decided to go it alone. When he started, Roszell still lived in



The 1983 tape *City of Angels* is one of two tapes by artists Marina Abramovic and Ulay handled by Electronic Arts Intermix.

Photo: Marita Sturken, courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix



Martha Rosler's *If Its Too Bad To Be True, It Could Be Disinformation* is distributed in the U.S. by the Video Data Bank and Electronic Arts Intermix, and in the American Federation of Art's travelling Whitney Biennial video show.

Photo: Marita Sturken, courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix

Kentucky, far outside the constellation of major urban centers of videomaking, and had to develop a strategy by the seat of the pants. He got a Macintosh Plus computer, bought mailing lists from places like the Academy of Criminal Justice Universities' newsletter, and struck his own dubs. With the Mac and desktop publishing software, Roszell "made a flyer that looks like it costs $2,000 for about $200." He prepares all the copy and graphics at home, then takes it to the local Kinko Copy chain where type can be produced for as little as 95 cents per page. With VHS dubs costing as little as four dollars to reproduce, Roszell makes 100 percent profit on his $280 sales price (rentals are priced at $200 to encourage sales).

Roszell is still unsatisfied because he believes that he hasn't yet reached the audience he really wants—including the cultural and educational market that video art distributors have been able to cultivate. Right now, his biggest users are schools with criminal justice curricula and departments of corrections—who regard the $280 price as a bargain compared to the high-priced industrial videos that dominate the corrections industry. He will get wider exposure through the September feed that WTTW-Chicago will present over the Public Broadcasting Service but fears that the broadcast will undercut sales. *Writing on Water*, a video chronicle of one family's memory of a friend's emotional decline, has not been distributed at all. It does not have as clear a topical niche as *Other Prisoners* and would probably best be handled by an art video or southern regional distributor. Roszell would like to see a video equivalent of the Contemporary American Fiction line in trade paperbacks. For now he will concentrate on distributing *Other Prisoners*, until it is established enough to attract a distributor.

Chances are that when Roszell is ready to approach distributors again, he will be able to continue self-distribution as well. The flexibility of the nonexclusive standard and the conditions of nonprofit distribution make concurrent self-distribution possible, sometimes even necessary. The Kitchen carries about 250 titles by 90 artists, EAI has over 800 active titles by 130 artists, VDB distributes about the same number of titles by 105 artists. Representing so many artists, it would be impossible for the distributors to devote equal attention to their many titles. Through self-distribution, a producer can give special attention to the tape, and clear a larger take of its earnings. Says videomaker Sherry Millner, "I'd much rather people come directly to me to rent the tapes, especially if I'm making the contacts and doing the work."

Gary Hill estimates that, after EAI, self-distribution is his second highest source of distribution income. But he figures the yearly return from that source at around $1,500, EAI about $2,000, income from the Kitchen and other distributors negligible, supplemented by the occasional windfall such as a $3,500 broadcast sale to Channel Four in Britain. Keep in mind that Hill has over 20 works in distribution at EAI alone. Hill's case is not uncommon, in fact, he probably ranks among the more successful producers in distribution. O'Hare at the Kitchen estimates that artists' annual income from nonbroadcast distribution ranges from nothing to about $2,000, which also means that the distributors are not faring much better (artists' distribution share is usually 40 to 60 percent). According to Kathryn Hixson's analysis of video distribution in *Media Arts*, both the Data Bank and EAI billed at least $150,000 in revenues in 1986. That's little more than $300,000 for hundreds of tapes.

Furthermore the income is earned disproportionately by a few artists and tapes. The distributors I spoke to agreed that only 10 to 12 titles are profit centers for an entire collection. According to Debra Zimmerman, last year Women Make Movies' top 10 titles grossed $42,000, while the other 90 titles earned only $52,000. Two of these were videos, *Trade Secrets*, by Stephanie Anatolocy, and *Women of Steel*, by Mon Valley Media. Zimmerman points out, "If we were purely commercial, it would make sense to just take those top 10 titles and push them. That's why nonprofit distributors are so important—because we handle titles that have small markets." And, as often is the case, fewer categories of independent media have smaller markets than artists' videos.

Consequently, one cannot underestimate the role that public funding has played building video distribution, led by the National Endowment for the Arts and New York State Council on the Arts. They provide direct grants to media organizations for distribution, then turn around and subsidize the institutional users that are the backbone of rentals and sales. Government funders made it possible for Women Make Movies to pick up 20 new tapes last year, for the Data Bank to launch the *What Does She Want?* series, for Third World Newsreel and Black Filmmakers Foundation to enter the video market. Grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the California Arts Council on the Arts financed NAATA's Crosscurrents Media. The NYSCA Media Program is even mulling over the prospect of providing grants to artists for self-distribution, as the Film Program has done for several years. Yet all players realize that the field cannot rely indefinitely on subsidies.

Ultimately, video distribution is not film distribution. It is possible for the social issue distributors to build a video audience from their film markets, but education and a careful marketing strategy is necessary. For a distributor like Third World Newsreel, whose audience is accustomed to conventional documentaries or narratives on social issues, the inclusion of tapes that are more formally challenging requires some kind of contextualization of the work. The Black Filmmakers Foundation or Women Make Movies, which have always carried some experimental films in their collections, may build upon that work to develop a video market. These kinds of hybrid or crossover strategies may prove to be the most exciting on the video distribution scene.

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FRENCH ROAST: THE ANNECY INTERNATIONAL ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL



The contortionist jokes in Bill Plymton's *Your Face* made it a favorite in Annecy's "Panorama" section.

Courtesy filmmoker

Karen Rosenberg

The biannual International Animated Film Festival in Annecy, France, which took place from May 28 through June 2, has been called the "Cannes of animation." A market with film distributors, television producers, and suppliers of computerized systems, initiated at the last Annecy festival in 1985, had three times as many booths this year. For those who remember the old days, it's a bit of a shock. "Annecy started about 25 years ago, with between 100 and 200 animators," recalls Robert Balser, a U.S. animator who runs a studio in Spain. "Then came the press and students and, before you knew it, there were 3,000 to 4,000 professionals here." In 1985, 45,000 viewers came to the six-day long event. Screening rooms are spread around this scenic town in the French Alps, the setting for Rohmer's *Claire's Knee*, but Annecy is small enough that most theaters are easily accessible by foot.

Yet Annecy is still a place to make friends as well as sales. A Canadian animator asked a Russian about the possibiliites for avant-garde filmmaking in the USSR and, due to Gorbachev's policy of greater openness, got a notably frank response. A bilingual (French/English) policy enables most of the participants to understand the seminars (on animation in schools and on 3-D computer animation, for example) and press conferences. The dress is unpretentious; the manner is also.

In March a committee composed of Istvan Antal, Kathleen "Spud" Houston, and Thierry Steff selected the short films for competion; Robert Balser, Joachim Kreck, and Francis Nielsen chose the feature films and video shorts. But one was advised to see all the films in the Panorama section for runners-up, which this year included Bill Plympton's marvelous *Your Face* (U.S.) in which a head turns itself inside out in a variety of contortions and *The Street of Crocodiles* (U.K.) about a world in decay, which won a prize at the 1986 World Festival of Animated Films in Zagreb and, therefore, couldn't compete at Annecy.

The major problems at the festival had to do with video. Instead of using monitors, the festival projected videotapes on a large screen, interspersed between films, causing the unfavorable comparisons between the quality of film and video resolution. Also, too many of the videos looked like exercises, including the 2-D computer animation winner, aptly named *Carnet d'Esquisses* (*Sketch Notebook*, France), by Michael Gaumnitz. The tape was booed by the Annecy audience, and at the awards ceremony one judge announced that a minority of the jury felt it didn't deserve a prize—in the presence of Gaumnitz. A better reception was given to the 3-D computer animation winner, John Lasseter's *Luxo Jr.* (U.S.), which stars two computer-generated lamps and is a model of tight storyboarding.

Another weakness of the festival was the section devoted to commercials—even the festival's *Daily* (a bilingual newspaper) complained about their "weak representation" and called for more entries in 1989. But there were also bizarre programming decisions, like scheduling ads, public service announcements, and station identification spots for Saturday and Sunday night screenings.

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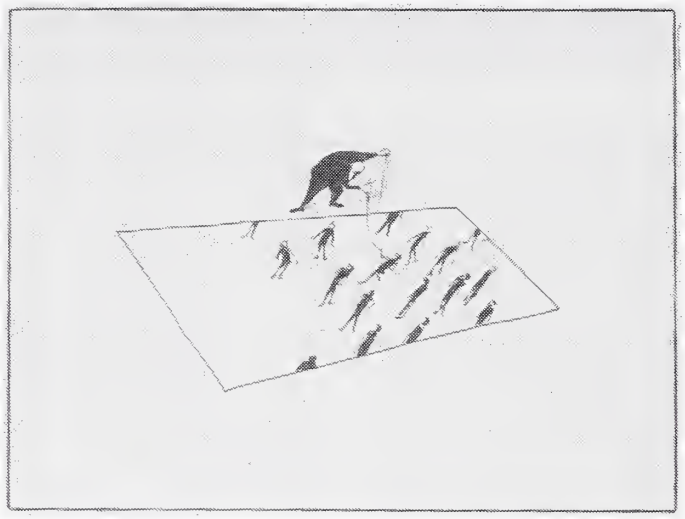
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Power struggles invade the animated world of *Seiltänzer (Ropedancer)*, by West German Raimund Krumme, awarded a Special First Prize at the Annecy International Animated Film Festival.

Courtesy filmmaker

The lights went up between works, every 10 to 40 seconds, and the audience grew audibly more impatient. When personal and philosophical animation is screened next to commercial art, neither gains by the juxtaposition.

The focus of Annecy is on films by *auteurs* — artistic personalities—with something meaningful to say. Theirs were the films that were talked about and the ones that won. *L'Homme qui plantait des arbres* (*The Man Who Was Planting Trees*, Canada), the Grand Prize recipient, illustrates a tale by the French writer Jean Giono about a poor peasant who dedicates his life to growing a forest on arid land that doesn't belong to him. Animator Frédéric Back, a participant in the environmental and anti-nuclear movements, clearly put his heart into the final drawings of regenerated earth. Many said that the Grand Prize honored not only this film but the 63-year old Back's humanitarian contribution to animation. The inclusion of a Back retrospective at Annecy this year seems to confirm this point. The film that shared the Grand Prize, *Smatchkan Sviat* (*A Crushed World*), by Bulgarian Boyko Kanev, is, like *L'Homme...*, occasionally sentimental, but redeemed by its original technique. The characters are paper cut-outs, and those who are beaten and berated literally crumple into balls. Everyone in this imaginary society seems to crave the thrills of sex and power, symbolized by an iron that smoothes out wrinkled paper. But the downtrodden hero finds happiness in the friendship of a crumpled boy.

More disturbing works received the second tier of prizes. *Seiltänzer* (*Ropedancers*), by Raimund Krumme (W. Germany), awarded the Annecy Jury's Special First Prize, shows a tense tug of war between an older and younger man. Krumme's brilliance lies in his imaginative use of a severely limited number of elements like rope and a rectangular plane, the site of the power struggle. *Dver'* (*The Door*), a striking puppet film by Nina Shorina (USSR), won the Special Third Prize. Shorina presents a powerful political allegory borrowing the dark, angular style of German Expressionism, where the residents of a Moscow apartment house are so accustomed to coping with a closed front door that when a child opens it, no one uses it.

Another philosophical prize-winner was *The Black Dog* (U.K.), by Alison de Vere, about a woman's temptation by the pleasures of the flesh and her route to higher knowledge. Its mixture of Greek and Egyptian mythology with theosophy is intensely personal. Produced for Britian's Channel Four, it was given the award for the Best Film for Television, but the critics at Annecy felt this was not sufficiently prestigious and awarded it their Critics' Prize as well.

A number of light and funny films that pleased Annecy audiences were not cited by the jury, suggesting again that the international panel of judges (Jane Aaron, Jean-Manuel Costa, Philippe Druiller, Henri Koulev, Rein Raamat, Shu-Cheng Wang) was drawn to serious works of art. A notable exception was Joanna Quinn's humorous *Girls' Night Out* (U.K.), the winner of a Special Second Prize. Quinn's excellent caricatures increased the hilarity of a kind of stag party in reverse, where female factory workers watch a male stripper in a nightclub.

These awards indicate that a new generation is coming of age as the masters pass away. Animation pioneer Norman McLaren died this year and was remembered at Annecy with a retrospective, which included some of his test films. The familiar sweet Eastern European puppet films were in evidence, both in competition and in the Karel Zeman retrospective, but now seem increasingly dated. A well-done exhibition of the techniques of animation at the Annecy museum shows that in the past artists concentrated on the "how" of animation. This year's Annecy festival suggests that narrative and philosophy are the chosen *métier* of younger animators.

Karen Rosenberg is a writer whose work has appeared in Sight and Sound, *the* Nation, *the* Boston Globe, *and elsewhere.*

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

Global Village Documentary Festival, April, New York. 14th annual review of new US docs & one of the only US fests devoted exclusively to doc film & video. Attended by curators, broadcasters, distributors & film enthusiasts. NY Shakespeare Festival at the Public Theater will host. Cats: video & film, reserved for independents & TV, open to producers working in public, network & cable TV. Approx. 300 entries prescreened by fest staff & 20-25 works selected & eligible for prize in ea. of 6 cats. Cash awards of $500. Fest also sponsors fall tour at media centers throughout country, w/ negotiated royalties. Past subject matter incl. personal docs, Latin America, int'l issues, artists' portraits, domestic policy, gay & lesbian themes, racial issues. Global Village defines doc as "any work whose key elements derive from reality: people, events, images, sounds & text" & seeks works that confront, question & provoke. Format: 16mm, 3/4" (preview on 3/4" only; no masters). Industrials discouraged. Entry fee: $25. Work should have been completed after 1985. Deadline: Nov. 15. Contact: Julie Gustafson, director, Global Village Documentary Festival, 454 Broome St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 966-7526.

Northwest Film & Video Center Young People's Film & Video Festival, Nov. 13-22, Oregon. 14th annual competition for kindergarten through college-age youth living in OR, WA, ID, MT & AR, sponsored by Oregon Art Inst. & run in conjunction w/ NW Film & Video Fest. Winners receive certificate & screening on public TV. Format: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Oct. 21. Contact: Kathy Clark, Northwest Film & Video Center, 1219 SW Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156.

United States Film Festival, Jan. 15-24, Utah. Sponsored by Sundance Institute, fest showcases new US independent films. Program incl. seminars, discussions, tributes, & int'l programming; industry professionals attend to discover new work. The mountain resort of Park City will again host fest, now celebrating its 10th anniv. Highlights: ind. feature narrative & feature doc competitions (w/ separate juries) & selection of US & world premieres. Jurors incl. film writers, producers, directors who award $2,500 in prizes & in-kind services in ea. cat. Last yr Robert Redford of Sundance took some prize-winning films to Tokyo to hold a US Film Festival in the Ginza. Entries must have been independently produced inside the US after Nov. '86 (those produced, financed or initiated by a major studio are incligible). Running time: over 70 mins (feature) & over 55 mins (doc); film must not have opened theatrically in over 3 US markets or broadcast nat'ly. Fest will invite one rep per film as guest. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; 3/4", VHS & Beta for preselection. Entry fee: $30. Entries must be sent prepaid. Deadline: Nov. 6. Contact: Tony Safford, program director, US Film Festival, Sundance Institute, 19 Exchange Pl., Salt Lake City, UT 84111; (801) 328-FILM.

Washington, DC International Film Festival-Filmfest DC, April 20-May 1, Washington, DC. Debuting last yr, this feature film fest grew out of desire to establish 1st int'l film fest in DC & showcase capital as one of nation's top markets. Sold-out screenings of DC premieres of over 30 films highlighted 12-day fest, with foreign films from 23 countries, major & ind. US films, children's films, program from Library of Congress archives & panels on film criticism & early black filmmaking. Fest also features films from one or more countries—last yr Brazil & this yr Sweden, USSR & Africa. Fest conceived by Tony Gittens of Univ. of DC's Black Film Inst. & Marcia Zalbowitz of DC Public Library Audiovisual Division; both responsible (w/ help of advisory board) for final selections. Coparticipants incl. Smithsonian Inst., Hirshhorn Museum, Library of Congress, American Film Inst., UDC-Black Film Inst., DC Public Library & Nat'l Gallery of Art. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Contact: Washington, DC Int'l Film Festival-Filmfest DC, Box 21396, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 727-2396.

Women in the Director's Chair Film & Video Festival, March, Illinois. Annually exhibits & promotes films & tapes by diverse women artists/directors reflecting richness of varied int'l cultural experiences from women's perspectives. Last yr's fest featured over 60 films & tapes in various cats. Panels focus on women & media issues. Doc, animation, computer graphics, narrative, personal & experimental films or tapes of any length eligible; productions must be directed by women & completed after '84. Entries prescreened by jury. Submissions must be on 3/4", VHS, or Beta. Entry fee: $20. Deadline: Nov. 1. Contact: Women in the Director's Chair Film & Video Festival, 3435 N. Sheffield Ave., #3, Chicago, IL 60657; (312) 281-4988.

FOREIGN

Belgrade International Festival Scientific & Technical Films, Feb. 22-27, Yugoslavia. Focus on films & TV productions that record contemporary scientific, technical & technological achievements in science, economy & culture. 30th yr of biennial exhibition held in Belgrade w/ 2nd showings in capitals of Yugoslav republics & autonomous regions & in larger economic & cultural centers. Features films from about 30 countries. Prizes include Nikola Tesla Grand Prix gold statuette; Nikola Tesla Gold, Silver & Bronze Medals for scientific research films, scientific-doc films & scientific-popular films; Nikola Tesla Gold, Silver & Bronze Medals for TV scientific films; & special prizes & certificates based on films' topical, scientific & artistic values. Entries must incl. a transcript. Official languages are Serbo-Croatian, English & Russian. No

Thinking in Pictures:

The Making of the Movie *Matewan*



John Sayles

John Sayles *(Return of the Secaucus Seven, The Brother from Another Planet)* knows movie-making from the ground up, and his account of the making of *Matewan* illuminates the creative and technical choices that lie behind this and every movie. With a novelist's eye and ear, Sayles captures for film buffs and professionals alike the complex magic of storytelling on film. Included are chapters on screenwriting, directing, editing, and more; sketches, photos, and the entire shooting script accompany the text.

Of *Thinking in Pictures*, Studs Terkel says, "John Sayles is in a class by himself. No film-maker or novelist touches him in the art of creating the community as hero."

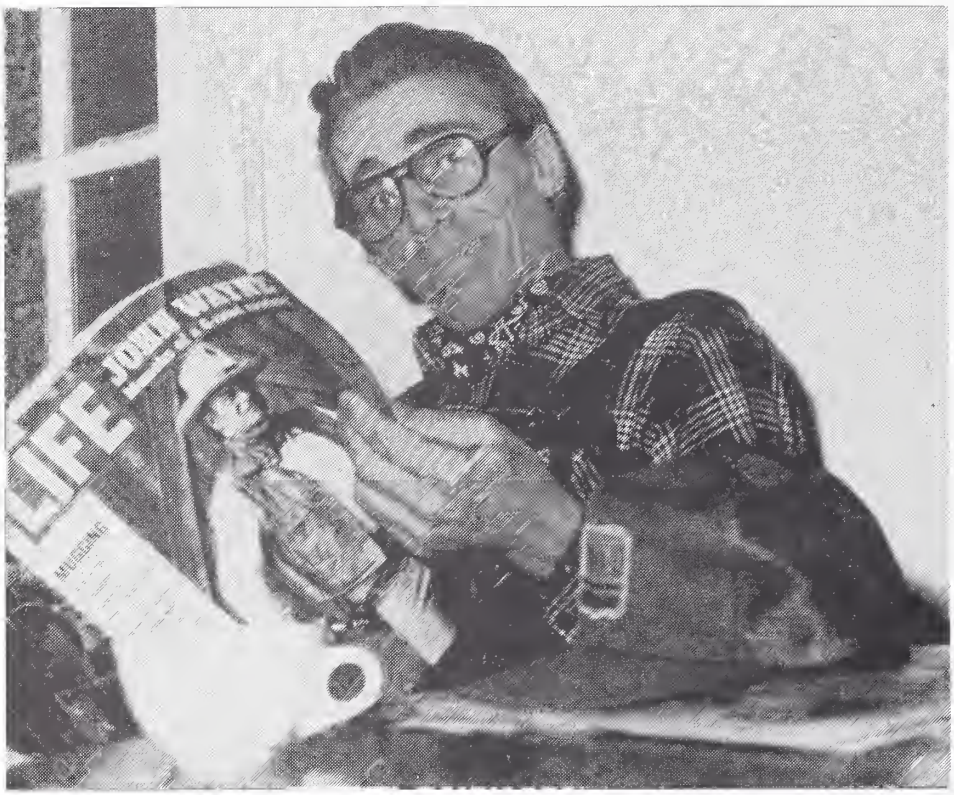
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Farmer Beesley (Bill Rice) goes to the big city to hunt for his girl in Rachid Kerdouche's *Her Name Is Lisa*, which appeared in the Berlin International Film Festival.

Courtesy filmmaker

fees. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Must have been produced after June '85. Deadline: Nov. 1. Contact: Nenad Dajic, chair of festival board, Belgrade Int'l Festival of Scientific & Technical Films, Kneza Milosa Broj 10, Postanski Fah 359, Belgrade, Yugoslavia; tel: 330-641, 331-938.

Berlin International Film Festival, Feb. 12-23, W. Germany. This int'l fest attracts thousands of filmmakers, fest directors, media & nat'l film organizations, journalists, exhibitors, distributors, buyers, industry reps, film commissions & others to exceptionally well-organized program & market; over 40 countries represented. Berlin is important arena for int'l sales, exposure & TV & coproductions deals; extensively covered by world press. Filmmakers who go prepared to strategize & meet people will fare very well. Fest consists of int'l competition for 35mm features & shorts, programmed by fest director Moritz de Hadeln; Panorama, an info section programmed by Manfred Salzgeber; Kinderfilmfest, a competitive children's film fest; Filmmesse, a market & the noncompetitive Int'l Forum of Young Cinema, created & directed by Ulrich Gregor, which presents new directors, innovative films, experimental & avant-garde work & in-depth controversial docs & narrative films. Other sections include New German Films & Retrospective. Producers can list section(s) of choice. Last yr consortium of independent US media organziations, coordinated by AIVF & the NY Foundation for the Arts, sponsored booth at Filmmesse representing US independents in the Jungforum, Panorama & retrospective; similar representation envisioned for '88. Ulrich Gregor will be in NY during Independent Feature Project Market (Oct. 6-16) & will prescreen 35mm & 16mm fiction & non-fiction films for possible inclusion. Films at least 60 mins, youthful in spirit, preferred. Must be German premiere, completed in 12 mos. preceding fest. Gregor will be at: Hotel Mayflower, 61st St. & Central Park W., New York, NY 10023; (212) 265-0060; or contact through Gordon Hitchens, 214 W. 85th St., New York, NY 10024; (212) 877-6856 /362-0254. Hitchens has appls. & further info. Deadline: Dec. 1. Fest address: Int'l Filmfestspiele Berlin, Budapesterstrasse 50, D-1000 Berlin, W. Germany or Welserstrasse 25, 1000 Berlin 30, W. Germany; tel: (030) 254890 or (030) 2136039; telex: 185255 fest d.

Brussels International Festival of Super 8 Film & Video, Nov. 10-15, Belgium. Well-regarded & well-attended int'l forum for super 8 filmmakers. Now in 9th yr, it welcomes "all forms of creativity w/o discrimination & all cats of films" in super 8 & video; work prescreened by int'l jury. Prizes are cash awards or equipment. Special info sections for films & videos out of competition, forums & social events round out fest. No entry fees. Deadline: Oct. 30. Contact: Robert Malengreau, director, Centre Multimedia, 12 rue P.E. Janson, 1050 Brussels, Belgium; tel: (02) 6493340.

Cinema du Reel International Film Festival of Visual Anthropology & Social Documentation, Mar. 5-13, France. For 10th anniversary, this fest showcasing ethnological & sociological docs has changed its structure. Rather than show large number of films, int'l competitive section will focus on 15-20 recent & in-progress films ('87 & after). All compete for awards, are screened several times & must be subtitled. Restrictions intended to draw wider audiences through multiple screenings & concentration of info. No entry forms; send info on film only. Must be French premiere. Prizes include Grand Prix (25,000 FF), Special Jury Prize (15,000 FF), Short Film Prize (5,000 FF) & Libraries' Prize, sponsored by Ministry of Culture (5,000 FF). Also program on recent regional docs; European focus in '87, USSR in '88. Fest shares return shipping costs. Format: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, 3/4"; preselection on 3/4". Deadline: Nov. 1. Contact: Marie-Christine de Navacelle, Bureau du Festival Cinema du Reel, Bibliotheque Publique d'Information, Centre Georges Pompidou, 75191 Paris Cedex 04, France: tel: 42 77 12 33; telex: CNAC GP 212 726.

Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival, Jan. 30-Feb. 6, France. 1st-time int'l biennial fest runs in tandem w/ 10th nat'l Clermon-Ferrand annual fest for French film productions & concurrent market. Productions completed after Jan. '85, under 40 minutes, in cats of fiction, animation, doc & experimental admitted. Industrial & adverising films not accepted. French subtitling strongly advised. Prizes incl. Grand Prize (10,000 FF to director & *Vercingetorix* trophy), Jury's Special Prize (10,000 FF to director) & Audience Prize (10,000 FF to director & *Vercingetorix* trophy). Entry forms (avail. at AIVF) must be sent prior to work; fest will notify entrants by Nov. Selected works due in France by Nov. 15. Selection committee also views films at other int'l festivals for preselection. Fest pays return shipping. Directors of selected films invited to Clermont-Ferrand for at least 3 days, w/ hotel & restaurant accomodations plus 400 FF travel stipend paid by fest. Fest reserves right to broadcast excerpts (10%) on French & foreign TV. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2" & 3/4" for preselection. Contact: Christian Guinot, 1st Clermont-Ferrand Int'l Short Film Festival, 26, rue des Jacobins, 63000 Clermont-Ferrand, France; tel: 73 91 65 73.

Filmotsav Festival of Films, January, India. Last yr fest featured a number of US ind. docs, programmed by FIVF, in special *Documedia* section, free to the public, which focused on women, youth, racial & class issues. Main info section of noncompetitive fest incl. 35mm features & shorts under 35 min.; 16mm shown in sep. section. Last yr over 200 films screened. Highlight was section on 3rd world women directors. Fest alternates w/ competitive New Delhi Int'l Film Fest & venues change from state capital to capital w/ea. edition. There is separate market. 1300 delegates attended fest, incl. 22 foreign journalists. Return shipping costs paid by fest; films returned w/in 2 wks. Deadline: Oct. 31. Contact: Directorate of Film Festivals, National Film Development Corp., Lok Nayak Bhawan, 4th fl., Khan Market, New Delhi, 110003 India; tel: 615953/694920; telex: 31-4951 Fest.

Goteborg Film Festival, Jan. 29-Feb. 7, Sweden. In 10th yr as leading int'l Scandinavia film fest, this noncompetitive fest on the North Sea draws over 30,000 people. Its stated purpose is to give Scandinavian public an opportunity to understand current world cinema outside conventional distribution forms, give distributors opportunity to discover & buy films from smaller producers & promote films offering commentary on social & cultural life. Films selected from other fests & from cassettes sent for preview. Swedish premiere required (except for home video); if film gets Swedish distrib prior to fest, that info must be forwarded. Shipping costs shared by fest & participants. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2" (PAL) for preview. Deadline: Dec. 3 (entry forms & publicity materials), Jan. 14 (prints). Contact: Marie Louise Arvidsson, Goteborg Film Festival, Box 7079, S-402 32, Goteborg, Sweden; tel: 31 410546; telex: 28674 FIFEST S.

Gottingen Film Festival, Apr. 27-May 1, W. Germany. For 10th anniversary, fest interested in including larger

selection of US ind. features docs & shorts (up to 20 min.). Diverse range of US producers previously shown, incl. series from Kartemquin Films & UCLA & sections on music films, new & avant-garde films & others. Formerly noncompetitive, fest instituting competitive section in '88. Participating directors provided w/ accommodations; transportation costs also covered for special invitees. Fest has relationship w/ German distributor, Kinowelt. Director Thomas Haberle doing pre-selection screenings at AIVF in October during IFP Market. For info, contact: AIVF Festival Bureau, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; 1/2" & 3/4" for prescreening. Fest pays shipping for screened films. Deadline: Feb. 15. Fest address: Thomas Haberle, Kinowelt, Mozartstrasse 31, 7000 Stuttgart 1, W. Germany; tel: (711) 605923.

Hong Kong International Film Festival, Mar. 31-Apr. 15, Hong Kong. Noncompetitive fest is major showcase for Asian, European, N. & S. American, African & Australian film in this part of world (last yr 130 int'l feature films screened). 12th edition features Int'l Cinema section of 40-50 new films, plus 1 retro. of 12-15 films; Asian Cinema section of 20-25 new films, plus 1 retro. of 12-15 films; Hong Kong Cinema section of 4-8 films & retro. of 25-30 films. Features, shorts, docs & animated films accepted. Sellout attendance at last yr's fest estimated at 121,000; publicity encompasses press conferences, press reviews & releases, TV & radio coverage & ads, exhibitions & posters. Fest invites filmmakers of participating US films "w/ various extents of hospitality." Films must be Hong Kong premiere. Organized by Urban Council of Hong Kong & accredited by the IFFPA. Preview on 1/2" or 3/4". Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact: Cynthia Liu, senior asst. manager, Hong Kong International Film Festival, Festivals Office, Hong Kong Coliseum Annex Building, Parking Deck Floor, KCR Kowloon Station, 8 Cheong Wan Rd., Kowloon, Hong Kong; tel: 3-642217; telex: 38484 USDHK HX.

Rotterdam Film Festival, Jan. 28-Feb. 1, The Netherlands. Described as a showcase for experimental docs, 3rd world features, US independents & the European avant-garde & one of the best fests for film buffs, this fest, now in its 17th yr, has a reputation as a place for discovering exciting new work. 130 films shown last yr, incl. over 30 by US independents. Over 125,000 attended; films screened from early a.m. til midnight. 4 awards established in '86, ea. w/ trophy & $5,000, judged by postal ballot sent to 71 int'l fest directors, distribs, film institutions, archives & critics for best debut film, most innovative film, best non-European/non-American film & for a filmmaker's complete oeuvre. New project was "City Life," Dutch Ministry of Culture-funded plan for 20 directors to make shorts about their cities; incl. Jim Jarmusch (NY), Charles Burnett (LA), Ken Loach (London), Mrinal Sen (Calcutta) & Mitsuo Yanagimichi (Tokyo). "Climate discussions" incl. Emile de Antonio, Serge Daney, a delegation from the People's Republic of China, Mira Liehm, Rezo Esadze, Otar Iosselliani & Marcel Martin. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Wendy Lidell, US contact, will preview work on 1/2" & 3/4". Fest dir Hubert Bals in NY on Oct. 17 to select films. Contact through Wendy Lidell, 125 E. 4th St., New York, NY 10003; (212) 475-8237. Fest address: Film Festival Rotterdam, Box 21696, 3001 AR Rotterdam, The Netherlands; tel: (010) 4118080; telex: 21378 filmf nl.

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Nature documentaries meet their match in Michael Posch's satirical *Mongo Makongo*, an animated take-off on wildlife films.

Courtesy filmmaker

Renee Tajima

Longtime animator Michael Posch has begun distribution of his new animated film, **Mongo Makongo**, a satirical nature documentary about a mythic land. Posch wrote, animated, and produced the parody that features exotic wildlife populating the land of Mongo Makongo. Ambulatory plants thrive on moonlight and, when things get too shady, walk around to find themselves better spots. Completion of *Mongo Makongo* was made possible by a grant from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Fellowship program, and it premiered in January at the ASIFA East animation festival, where it won top honors for Best Film. The film was picked up for distribution by Expanded Entertainment and has already screened this summer at the New Jersey Film and Video Festival and Animation Celebration in Los Angeles. *Mongo Makongo:* Michael Posch, 50 Harmon Pl., N. Haledon, NJ 07508; (201) 427-1395.

Japanese artists Iri and Toshi Maruki witnessed the devastation at Hiroshima in the immediate aftermath of the atomic bomb. Unable to evade their memories over the years that followed, they have collaborated to create an artistic testimony in the *Hiroshima Murals*, a stunning record of the atomic blast and the human experience of nuclear war. **Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima**, a new one-hour film by John Junkerman and John Dower, documents the story behind the murals and explores their compelling images. "When I paint people being slaughtered," Toshi reflects on camera, "I feel as if I am being slaughtered myself.... We do paint dreadful, cruel scenes, but I want to paint them with kindness." Junkerman and Dower were able to produce the film with support from the Wisconsin Humanities Committee, Hoso Bunka Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Japan Foundation, and the Ruth Mott Foundation. A companion volume of the Maruki's art, *The Hiroshima Murals*, has been published by Kodansha International, New York. *Hellfire:* Maruki Film Project, 10 Summer St., #3, Somerville, MA 02143; (617) 628-8536.

Todd Coleman moved to San Francisco from Denver at the age of 16. Interested in art and acting, he worked as both a chef and personal secretary until being diagnosed with AIDS at the age of 21. **Living with AIDS** was filmed during the last six weeks of Todd's life. In it, filmmaker Tina DiFeliciantonio documents interactions with Todd and those who formed the nucleus of support during those weeks: his lover Bob Runyon, a 33-year old construction worker who remained central to his life, a nurse, a social worker, and the two hospice volunteers who befriended Todd. *Living with AIDS* attempts to demystify the disease and portrays alternative community programs such as the Shanti Project, an AIDS support organization. Todd lived in an apartment managed by the Shanti Project for people with AIDS, and received home healthcare from a local hospice group, before he died at the age of 22. *Living with AIDS* was designed to be used for health care professionals as well as laypersons and has already achieved widespread recognition, including an Emmy for Best Student Documentary, first prize for Best Documentary Short at the Palo Alto Film Festival, and a 1987 Student Academy Award. *Living with AIDS:* Tina DiFeliciantonio, 128 Linda St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 282-2409.

Actor Richard Marcus envelopes the screen with his achingly blue eyes and begins to tell a painful story. He is coming home. His girlfriend meets him at the plane and breaks the news: "I'm seeing someone else!" But Marcus would rather talk baseball, about the loyalty of owners and teams to the towns they leave behind. No, he'd rather talk about a pick-up game in a local park where total strangers ask him to play, then reject him, then cheer him up. **Ballplayer** is a deadpan, one-man soap opera by veteran Ant Farmer Chip Lord. The 13-minute video screened at the National Video Festival and has been picked up for distribution by Electronic Arts Intermix. *Ballplayer:* EAI, 10 Waverly Pl., 2nd fl., New York, NY 10003; (212) 473-6822.

When American industrial giants like Coca-Cola and Pepsi switched to fructose during the late 1970s, the Philippines island of Negros Occidental was hurtled into financial disaster. The monocrop sugar economy collapsed, and over a quarter million children died of malnutrition. Filmmakers Linda Mabalot and Antonio De Castro spent February in Negros documenting the fall and rise of the island society, as the farmers responded to the crisis with new measures for land reform and self-reliance. **Philippines in Transition** is the working title for the 30-minute film that traces the development of the farm cooperatives, the incipient National Federation of Sugar Workers that is negotiating with the agribusiness hacienda owners, and the new hope in Negros Occidental. The film was shot on super 8 with a two-person crew that consisted of De Castro and Mabalot, then transferred to one-inch video by Boston's Brodsky and Treadway. The producers are now editing on one-inch at the San Francisco Production Group. They will also put together a 15-minute version that will be used for fundraising purposes by relief agencies doing work in Negros. *Philippines in Transition* was made possible by grants from United Airlines, the Werner Erhart Foundation, and individual donations. *Philippines in Transition:* Linda Mabalot, (213) 821-6528 or Antonio De Castro, (415) 952-9630.

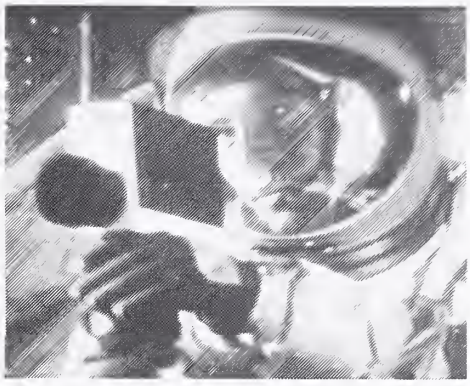
Seattle filmmaker Jeff Stookey will premiere **Western Movements** this fall, a series of films set on the western edge of the North American continent. According to the filmmaker, the four pieces form a contemplative journey from urban complexity to rural solitude, from the exterior inward, from western civilization to the western wilderness. *Western Movements* comprises *Fugue*, which dissects four locations in Seattle in the style of a musical fugue; *Jesus Christ Made Seattle under Protest*, dealing with the history and

change in what use to be the downtown Skid Row area; *The Dam Job*, a film that moves through an enormous hydroelectric dam, setting the individual against technology and the meaning of labor; and *The Jim Petty Place*, with its glimpses of the past set in an abandoned farm house in the mountains of eastern Washington, evoking the summer landscapes of the Okanogan Valley where Stookey grew up. *Western Movements:* Picto-Graph, 105 Harvard Ave., E. #302, Seattle, WA 98102; (206) 322-1958.

Using a two-camera set-up at New York City's Mother's Sound Stage, on Mother's Day, producer/director Skip Blumberg shot the 16-minute musical video entitled **Women of the Calabash**. The tape, commissioned by the Public Broadcasting Service series *Alive from Off-Center* for its new fall season, is a celebration of the quartet of the same name. Hardware for the shoot was provided by B Video, with postproduction at KTCA in St. Paul, Minnesota, and music by Women of the Calabash. *Women of the Calabash:* Skip Blumberg, 69 Reade St., New York, NY 10007; (212) 732-1725.

The Ascent of Man is Jayce Salloum's recently-completed four-part multimedia installation series, consisting of a single channel video, slide dissolve program, mixed media wall pieces & a bookwork designed to be shown individually or combined as an installation. The four components, "Silent Running," "Appendix," "Conditions of Mercy," and "Acts of Consumption," examine the way reproductions/representations are used to promote, influence, and direct a way of life. Salloum examines the perceptual process to present a view of the domination of humanistic concerns by scientific and corporate materialism. *The Ascent of Man* has already screened at the Salso Film and Television Festival in Italy, the San Francisco International Video Festival, and the Kijkhuis World Wide Video Festival in Holland. *The Ascent of Man*: Jayce Salloum, UCSD, B-027, La Jolla, CA 92093; (619) 534-2862.

After 12 years of investigative research, Brent Owens has completed **The Bronx: A Cry For Help**, a one-hour historical documentary on the South Bronx community. Owens' new film is an insider's view of the little understood neighborhood in New York, tracing the pulse of life and documenting how the political system has failed its residents. We see President Jimmy Carter visiting in 1977 to call for massive aid, thus making the South Bronx an international issue, then Ronald Reagan and Senator Edward Kennedy back again three years later during the presidential campaign, to criticize Carter's failed promises. In 1987, the South Bronx that Owens documents remains unchanged and its problems persist. *The Bronx: A Cry for Help*: Brent Owens Prods, 1008 Woodycrest Ave., Bronx, NY 10452; (212) 293-3383.



***The Ascent of Man,* Jayce Salloum's four-part installation, examines how representations are used to shape a way of life.**

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INDEPENDENTS WELCOMED

CLASSIFIEDS

The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy • Rent • Sell," "Freelancers" & "Postproduction" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$15 per issue.** Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear.

Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., October 8 for the December issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

Buy • Rent • Sell

For Sale: M77 Moviola, 6-plate, great condition. $3500. Call Nick Gomez at (914) 476-4884.

For Rent: 16MM production package at incredibly low rates. Includes Aaton, Cooke, Nagra, plus top notch operators. Please call for rates (914) 234-7564.

For Sale: Eclair NPR 16mm camera with 3 mags, original cases, Angenieux 9.5-95 zoom lens and other accessories. $6500 or best offer. For details, contact Paul Gagne at (800) 243-5020; in CT (203) 226-3355.

For Sale: Fairlight CVI Computer Video Instrument. Gen-lockable digital video unit performs infinite amount of digital, paintbox & character generator effects at low cost. Ideal for fashion & music videos. Call Richard or Jeff at (212) 233-5220.

For Sale: 1) Eclair NPR pkg w/ sync motor, 12-120 Angenieux lens, 3 mags, zoom motor, cables, cases, filters. $2500. 2) Steenbeck flatbed, 6-plate. Good cond. $6500. 3) Beaulieu camera w/ 12-120 Angenieux lens, case, battery chargers. $1000. Or best offers! Call Ross Spears, (804) 295-0262.

For Sale: French Eclair ACL with 1-400' mag and 3-200' mags; Cinema Products crystal/variable speed motor, Angenieux 12.5-75 zoom, new G&M battery belt, case. Recently overhauled, excellent condition. Must sell. $3200 or best offer. Call Peter at (301) 467-6712.

For Sale: Sony 6800 portable 3/4" recorder. Like new. $2500. Also Sharp dual cassette tape recorder (RD688AV) w/ sync track for slide projector shows. $350. (718) 786-5001.

For Sale: Uher recorder, 4000 Report-L w/ rechargeable battery & AC adapter. Also Uher M537 microphone, cables, etc. Good condition. Will consider any reasonable offer. Call Roberta (212) 874-7255.

Looking to Buy an optical printer. J-K or other optical printers welcome. Also looking for a Kodak Ektar printer lens. Please call Ed (201) 568-0378; machine (718) 575-8012.

Must Sell: Sony editing system 5850, 5800, RM440. JVC CR4900U 3/4 portable. Crosspoint switcher system 6112, 6403, 6800. Tektronix sync signal generator 1470. Tektronix WFM RM429. Microtime TBC 1020. Excellent condition & prices. (718) 232-7572.

Wanted: Table with rewinds; 16mm tape splicer; 16mm viewer. Call Dan Klugherz (516) 283-8660.

For Rent: 6-plate Steenbeck. Long term rental only (6-12 months). Reasonable rates, negotiable. Call Roberta (212) 874-7255.

For Rent: Moviola 6-plate M-86. No reasonable offer refused. Instant stop. Plates on/off. Perfect condition. (203) 637-0445.

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Director of Photography w/ critically acclaimed films in US & Europe. Reels available for documentary as well as narrative work. Full Aaton camera package w/ super 16 gate. My rate will fit your budget. Let's talk. (212) 475-1947.

Cameraman with own equipment: 16SR, 35BL, superspeed lenses, sound equipment, lighting van, passport, certified scuba diver, speak French, a little Spanish. Call (212) 929-7728.

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Art - Director - Props: Need sets? Special props? Experienced art director good at low budget magic for music video & independent features. Call Paula Longendyke (212) 242-7484.

Videographer with 3/4" Package including new Sony DXC 3000 CCD camera and 6800 deck. Reasonable rates, will travel. Call David (201) 568-3112.

Sound Recordist: Experienced in narrative & documentaries. Own sound package includes Nagra 4.2, Schoeps hyper-cardiod, RE-11, lavs, bloop lights, etc. Reasonable rates. Cathy Calderon (212) 580-2075.

Prod. Manager, assistant director, script, PC, PA, design & props: You name it, I'm here with experience & energy. Will consider all offers for film/tape work near & far. Have drivers license, passport and sense of humor. Otie Brown (212) 645-0619.

Auditor: Experienced feature film production accountant available for NYC or any location. Manual or computer books. Budgets thru post production. Foreign language skills. Jane (718) 852-5984.

Cinematographer with 35BL and 16SR to work on student and independent films. Equipment at reasonable rates. Vini (212) 620-0084.

Casting Consultant: Your project demands the best: why not have it? W/ talent agency & management exp., I can find actors best suited to all your needs. From the norm to the bizarre; big budget or small; union or nonunion. Also avail. to photographers for print assignments. Negotiable fees. (212) 685-7151.

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Songwriter/Composer—multi-talented, published & recorded—looking for interesting independent or student film & video projects to write soundtrack for. Contact Jeff at (718) 797-3353.

Experienced Gaffer available for interesting projects. Lighting packages, generator, location van and crew. Call for appointment. J. Anthony Productions (516) 294-1038.

Scripts Wanted: Indep. film producer seeks treatment for low budget dramatic prod. Must be suitable for feature-length theatrical & home video release. Prefer the unusual, but also interested in standard commercial fare. Send copyrighted treatments or synopsis to: E.S. Thomas, Box 553, Glen Ridge, NY 07028-0553.

Hamilton & Associates, Consultants. Business & marketing plan specialists for independent filmmakers. Prospectus offerings written. Ancillary rights experts. Principal consultant: Peter Hamilton, MBA (Wharton), co-author of IFP/Sundance *Off-Hollywood*. 151 W. 19 St., NY, NY 10011. (212) 463-9772.

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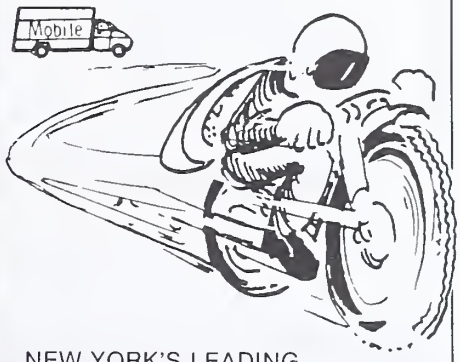
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Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

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Conferences • Workshops

ANNUAL MEDIA ALLIANCE CONFERENCE: "Focus on Organizing Alternatives," with special presentations & screenings by reps from British independent film & video workshops. Panels incl. avant-garde social issue productions, video self-distribution, community media access & nat'l organizing efforts. Oct. 16 & 17, Boro of Manhattan Community College, NYC. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

1ST ANNUAL MEDIAMIX CONFERENCE in conjunction with 2nd Annual Media Arts Exhibit will focus on media arts & the community. Panels incl. technology & aesthetics, women in media, public access & small format production; workshops will cover video project planning & small format. Oct. 16 & 17, Art History Hall & May Duff Walters Hall, Douglass College Campus, Rutgers Univ., New Brunswick, NJ. Organized by Mediamix, hosted by Visual Arts Dept. of Mason Gross School of the Arts. Write: Box 1623, New Brunswick, NJ 08903; or call Walter Blakely; (201) 937-9810 or Albert Nigrin; (201) 249-9623.

NEWARK MEDIAWORKS offering video production classes for beginning & intermediate video students: Basic Video Editing (Oct. 19, 26, Nov. 2, 9), Intermediate Video Editing (Nov. 16, 18, 23) & Production Unit Workshop (Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 28 or Dec. 5, 12, Jan. 2). For info. & registration, contact: Dana Kenney; (201) 690-5474.

Films • Tapes Wanted

CINEMA VERITE, a weekly cable access series in New York City, seeks films & videotapes for programming consideration. Documentaries, art & dance films, dramas, shorts and/or works in progress shot on video or film acceptable. First 5 min. of 30 min. cassette should be blank. Send 3/4" tapes to: Cinema Verite International, 444 E. 86 St., #21J, New York, NY 10028.

LACE VIDEO: Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions seeks 3/4" videos for ongoing screenings. Send tapes, resumés, letters & SASE to: Anne Bray, Video Coordinator. LACE Bookstore now rents artist videos in collaboration w/ Vidiots, Santa Monica. For more info, contact: Nancy Barton. LACE, 1804 Industrial St., Los Angeles, CA 90021; (213) 624-5650.

ONEWEST MEDIA seeks doc films & tapes produced by independents for nat'l/int'l distribution. Categories incl. Hispanic, Native Amer., the Amer. West, women's issues, rehabilitation, folk art & dramatic shorts. Contact: OneWest Media, Box 5766, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

INDEPENDENT FOCUS: WNET-New York seeks submissions for 11th 13-week season to begin July '88. Accepting independent film & video works in all categories. Broadcast fees: $50/min. per work for two releases in two yrs. Deadline: Oct. 1. Submission forms from: Faith Kiermaier, Independent Focus, WNET/13, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY 10019.

ITALTOONS CORP., a film distribution & production company, is seeking feature film projects in development or preproduction for US & int'l markets—theatrical, television & home video. Send outlines, scripts &/or treatments to: Italtoons Corporation, 32 W. 40 St., # 2L, New York, NY 10018.

Opportunities • Gigs

AWARD WINNING EDITOR wanted for 57 min. video doc. Must have quality reel w/ fully developed work. Call ASAP, (212) 334-0002.

VIDEO INSTRUCTORS sought by St. Bart's Video, a nonprofit video production org., for 6 wk session(s) of "Introduction to Video Production." Graduate courses in TV/Video or equivalent production experience necessary, plus skills with JVC 3/4" video camera/editing equipment. Send resumés to: Becky Garrison, chair, St. Bart's Video, St. Bartholomew's Community Club, 109 E. 50th St., New York, NY 10012. No calls, please.

SUNDANCE INSTITUTE seeks applications for 5-day script-writing program in January 1988. Projects must be in feature length script form, accompanied by letter of recommendation from source w/in film industry, ind. film community, regional media center, or film school. Also: completed appl. form, bios on key personnel, 2-page story synopsis & cover letter on status of project. For appl. materials, call (818) 954-4776, or write: Sundance Institute, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, CA 91522.

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER & PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS needed for 16mm doc on women & eating problems. Shooting begins in Nov. Help coordinate events, research funding strategies & work in a production capacity. Salary negotiable & dependent on funding. Send letter/resumé to: Meredith Zamsky, Food for Thought Productions, 235 E. 5th St., #1, New York, NY 10003.

ERIK BARNOUW AWARD, given by the Organization of American Historians, recognizes outstanding reporting or programming on network or cable TV or in documentary film that is about American history, its study, or the promotion of history as a lifetime habit. Winning program will receive certificate & screening at annual OAH conference. Programs released after Jan. 1, 1987, eligible. Submit 16mm film or 3/4" cassette by Dec. 1 to: Robert Rosenstone, Division of Humanities & Social Sciences, Caltech 228-77, Pasadena, CA 91125.

Publications • Software

Super 8 Film/Filmmaker Index: A *Who's Who* in 8mm, sponsored by Int'l Center for 8mm Film & Video, slated for publication in April '88. Deadline for inclusion is Oct. 17. Super 8 & 8mm filmmakers interested in participating should contact: Al Nigrin, Light Pharmacy Films, 5 S. Adelaide Ave., Highland Park, NJ 08904.

National Endowment for the Arts: April 1987 guide to the NEA now available. Incl. brief descriptions of NEA programs & complete listing of all grants. Contact: NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

Participate's comprehensive directory of New York State resources for public access cable & low cost video prod. Listings are organized by county & incl. cable access & media art centers, libraries, schools, universities & other orgs offering prod. or postprod. equip., training, funding, or other resources. Useful publications also noted. 220 pp., $10. For more info, contact: PARTICIPATE, Claremont Ave., #32, New York, NY 10027; (212) 316-9050.

Artists' Housing Manual: *A Guide to Living in New York City*, published by Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. Up-to-date legal primer written by attys Nancy Biberman & Roger Evans. Price: $12.98 plus $2 postage & handling. Available from VLA, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., New York, NY 10019.

Video Handbook is now available from UCVideo. Written by video pros, the handbook is a step-by-step guide to portable video prod. & postprod. $8 plus $1.25 postage & handling per book. Order through UCVideo, 425 Ontario St., SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 624-4444.

National Endowment for the Humanities 21st annual report is now available. Incl. brief descriptions of NEH programs & complete listing of all grants. Free while supply lasts. Contact: NEH 1986 Annual Report, Rm. 409, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

What Is Hiroshima, Mommy? *Vision of A Thousand Cranes: A Guide to the Twenty Best Films, Videotapes & Slideshows for Hiroshima/Nagasaki Days* now available from the Alternative Media Information Ctr. $3/ea. plus 20% postage; discount for bulk orders. Contact: Media Network, 121 Fulton St., 5th fl., New York, NY 10038; (212) 619-3455.

Gigabit Forum: Premiere issue of journal on computer-based digital sound prod. now available from Sound Genesis Corp. Contact: Sound Genesis; (612) 944-8528.

New York Foundation for the Arts: 1987-88 Artists Roster now available. Comprehensive listing of over 300 artists from 31 counties around NYS, incl. names, addresses, phone numbers & areas of artists' specialization. Send $12.50 check or money order to: NYFA, 5 Beekman St., Ste. 600, New York, NY 10038, Attn: Craig Raia.

Cable Programming Resource Directory 1987: *Guide to Community TV Production Facilities & Programming Sources & Outlets* now available from Broadcasting Publications & the Nat'l Federation of Local Cable Programmers. Incl. info on community programming ctrs, free & low-cost programming sources, satellite programming services & int'l cross-cultural programming. $34.95; CA & DC add 6% sales tax. Contact: Broadcasting Book Div., 1705 De Sales St., NW, Washington, DC 20036; (800) 638-7827.

Resources • Funds

National Endowment for the Arts: Film/Video Production grant application deadline: Nov. 13. Contact: Media Arts Program. Arts Adm. Fellows Program encompasses 13-wks at NEA's Washington, DC offices to become acquainted with the policies & operations of the agency & gain a nat'l overview of arts activities around the country. Deadline: Jan. 8, 1988. Contact: Arts Adm. Fellows Program. NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

National Endowment for the Humanities: Next deadline for humanities projects in the media: March 18, 1988. Contact: James Dougherty, NEH, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 786-0378.

New York State Film Exhibition Program grants available from the Film Bureau. Offered to nonprofit organizations in NYS for film screenings of ind. works or films not ordinarily available to the public. Matching funds of up to $300 are available for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Film Bureau, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting's Open Solicitation deadlines for FY 1988: Jan. 8 & April 22, 1988. For applications, contact: CPB, 1111 16th St NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 955-5100.

Guggenheim Foundation fellowships for scholars & artists deadline: Oct. 1. Contact: Guggenheim Foundation, 90 Park Ave., New York, NY 10016; (212) 687-4470.

Media Action Project: Formerly called Third World Producers Project: one-on-one consultations on all aspects of independent film & video productions directed to Afro Amer., Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino & Native Amer. producers. Also fiscal sponsorships offered to independent producers anywhere in U.S. Send short synopsis on project & resumé to: Film News Now Foundation, 335 W. 38th St., 5th fl., New York, NY 10018.

Trims & Glitches

Kudos to Steven Okazaki, this year's recipient of the Steve Tatsukawa Memorial Fund award.

Congrats to AIVF members who are recipients of NEA Film/Video Production grants: David Blair, Skip Blumberg, Stevenson Palfi, Frederick Wiseman, Lisa Hsia, Julie Gustafson, John Reilly, Slawomir Grunberg, Zbigniew Rybczynski, Julie Harrison, Trinh T. Minh-ha, James Brown, Rita Myers, Joanna Priestley & Orinne J.T. Takagi.

Congrats to Wheeler Dixon, AIVF member & winner of a $1,500 grant from the 1987 Interdisciplinary Arts Fellowship Program sponsored by DiverseWorks & the Southwest Alternate Media Project.

Kudos to Howard Silver, who shared an Emmy for

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AIVF would like to thank these companies for participating. Other firms wishing to be included should contact Ethan Young, AIVF Membership Services, (212) 473-3400.

Outstanding Video Editing of a Children's Program for *Pee Wee's Playhouse.*

CONGRATULATIONS to winners of the 1987 Paul Robeson Awards offered by the Newark Black Film Festival: Irving Saraf for *The Angel That Stands By Me: Minnie Evans' Paintings*, Marlon Riggs, *Ethnic Notions*, Iverson White, *Dark Exodus* & writer Maria Heritier, *Love in Vain.*

CONGRATULATIONS to film/videomakers selected for Independent Acquisition Fund by WHYY-TV 12: Dirk Eitzen, *Special Feelings*, David Goodman, *South Africa Unedited*, George Nista, *Aprhroditus*, Charles Woodman, *Lota Burger.*

KUDOS to the AIVF members who were awarded Documentary Writers Fellowships by the Writers Guild of American Foundation: St. Clair Bourne & Philip Halprin.

CONGRATS to *Deep Dish Television*, voted Most Creative Cable TV Series & to Youth Vision, winner in the Media Professional Series category, in the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers' Hometown USA video festival.

The FIVF Festival Bureau has established a tape library of members' current works to expedite screenings for upcoming film and video festivals. Members interested in depositing their work in the library should contact: Kathryn Bowser, Festival Bureau director, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. 1/2" and 3/4" tapes will be accepted.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant-making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency), the Governor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent.*

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The Copyright Primer for Film and Video
Sparkman, $3.50

Practical copyright information: what is covered by copyright, registration procedure, exceptions, sample releases.

Selected Issues in Media Law
Mayer, $2.50

Legal information on copyrights, option agreements, distribution contracts, glossary of legal terms.

Before You Shoot
Garvey, $10.00

Manual for the production side of filmmaking—from the idea stage to distribution.

The Independent Film and Videomakers Guide
Wiese, $14.95

Advice on film and video financing; investor presentations; limited partnerships; market research, distribution; list of buyers of non-theatrical films; pay TV, foreign TV and home video, contacts for music videos.

Home Video: Producing for the Home Market
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Advice on development and distribution of original home video programs, new marketing opportunities for independent producers, and info on presentations, bugeting, and contracts.

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Sponsorships: A Guide for Video and Filmmakers
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SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF THE AIVF/FIVF BOARD

The AIVF and FIVF Boards of Directors met in New York City on June 19, 1987. The following is a summary of the boards' discussions and resolutions. A copy of the complete minutes are available upon request. Board meetings are open to the public, and members are encouraged to attend. The next meeting is scheduled for September 18, 1987. For information about time and place of future meetings, call AIVF: (212) 473-3400.

The Membership Committee chair, Robin Reidy, reported that the year's membership dues were expected to reach AIVF's goal of $130,000. We expect to make charge card membership and merchandise transactions available to members, pending bank approval, in the new fiscal year. Plastic displays for AIVF literature are being distributed to media centers and other facilities nationally.

The Advocacy Committee chair, Robert Richter, reported on weekly meetings in which the committee has pounded out its positions on upcoming public broadcasting legislation and is preparing for Congressional oversight hearings this fall. The principle proposals are for: 1. the establishment of an Independent Program Service to distribute public broadcasting funds to independent producers and to assist in the distribution and promotion of their work to public television markets, and 2. the legislated establishment and funding of minority consortia to assist in the production and packaging of the work of minority producers.

Executive director Lawrence Sapadin reported that about 100 proposals had been received for the FIVF Donor Advised Fund. In addition, FIVF has applied for an Advancement Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Addressing old business, the board (FIVF) approved the panelists selected for the Donor-Advised Fund by the project consultant. The board (AIVF) also approved, with minor changes, a letter to the NEA expressing concern about the Endowment's refusal to follow a peer panel's recommendation for funding of a film project, *Peliculas*, on Central America.

The board unanimously approved new budgets for AIVF and FIVF and encouraged the executive director to explore holding the 1988 AIVF Indie Awards at the American Museum of the Moving Image in Astoria. Finally, the board (AIVF) voted to have the Membership Committee encourage additional joint membership arrangements and to explore other affiliations with existing regional organizations.

WELCOME ABOARD

In August, votes were counted for five new members of the AIVF's board of directors. The results indicate a return to a majority of New York City-based board members, reversing a trend toward diverse geographical representation over the past few years. Loni Ding, an award-winning, Bay Area independent, was re-elected to her third term. Adrianne Benton, an international marketing director at the Children's Television Workshop and board member of the Benton Foundation in Washington, D.C., was elected for the first time to the AIVF board after serving as an appointed board member of FIVF. New to the AIVF board are Robert Aaronson, Wendy Lidell, and Regge Life.

Although first-time board members, Lidell and Aaronson are hardly newcomers to the organization. Lidell was the director of AIVF's Festival Bureau from 1981 to 1984. She is now selecting and distributing American independent work for international exhibition. Aaronson took over direction of the Festival Bureau from Lidell, leaving AIVF in 1986 to work for the Artists' Program of the New York Foundation for the Arts. In September Aaronson will join the public relations firm Clein and Feldman as a film publicist. Regge Life, the third New Yorker to join AIVF's board this year, participated in the AIVF committee that negotiated the recent Screen Actors Guild agreement for low-low-budget productions. He has produced and directed short films and numerous industrials and has directed episodes of *The Cosby Show*. Life promises to represent both independent producers and the black filmmaking community during his term on the AIVF board.

Outgoing board members who did not succeed in their re-election bids are Howard Petrick, a Bay Area independent producer; Robin Reidy, executive director of IMAGE Film/Video Center in Atlanta; and Brenda Webb, executive director of Chicago Filmmakers. Joyce Bolinger, executive director of Chicago's Center for New Television and past chair of the AIVF board, chose not to run for re-election.



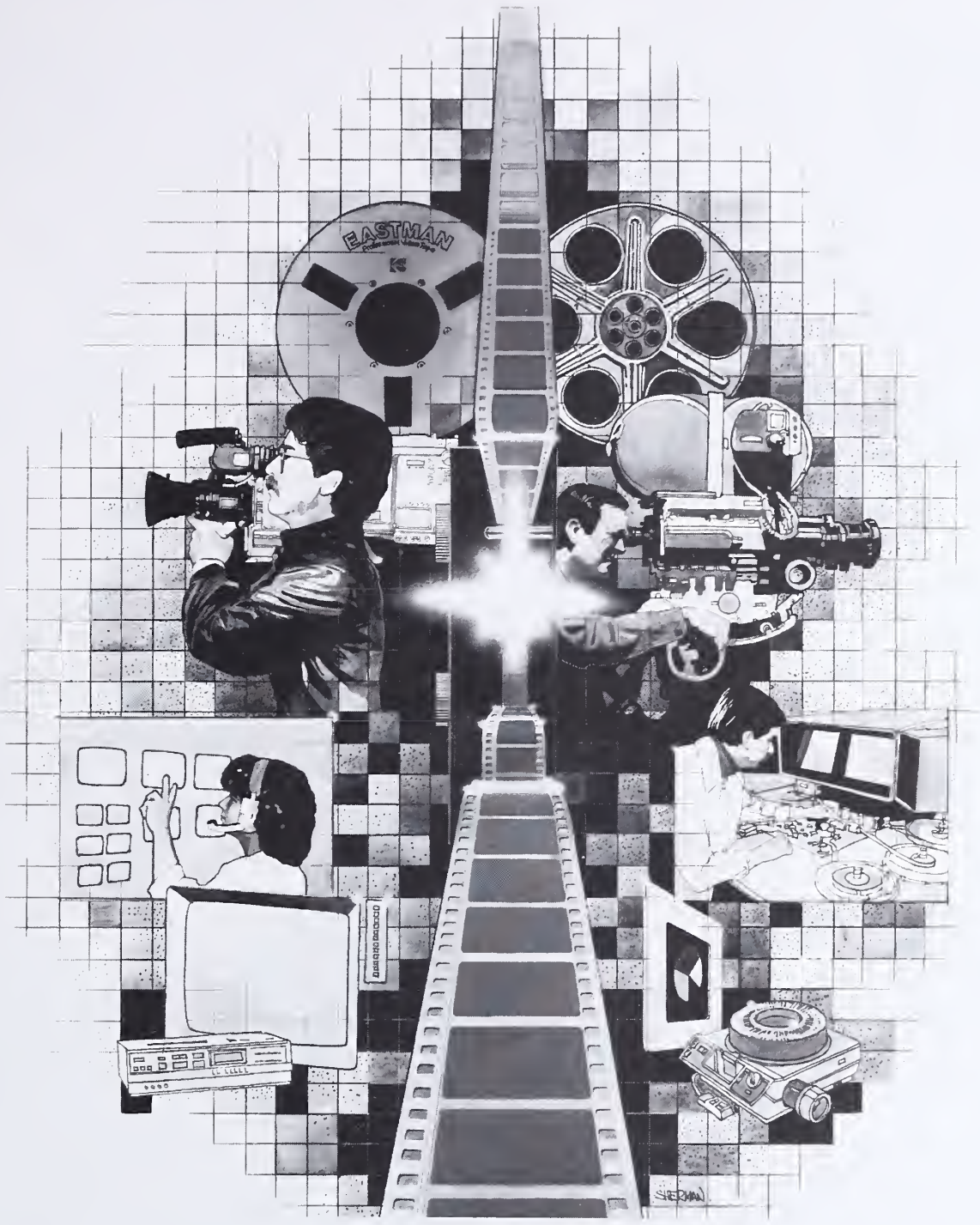
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—curator Neil Seiling

(continued on page 16)

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AIVF/FIVF STAFF MEMBERS: Lowrence Sapadin, executive director; Ethon Young, membership/programming director; Kothryn Bowser, festivol bureau director; Morton Marks, business manoger; Roino Fortini, administrotive ossistant; Sol Horowitz, Short Film Showcose project odministrator.

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* FIVF Board of Directors only

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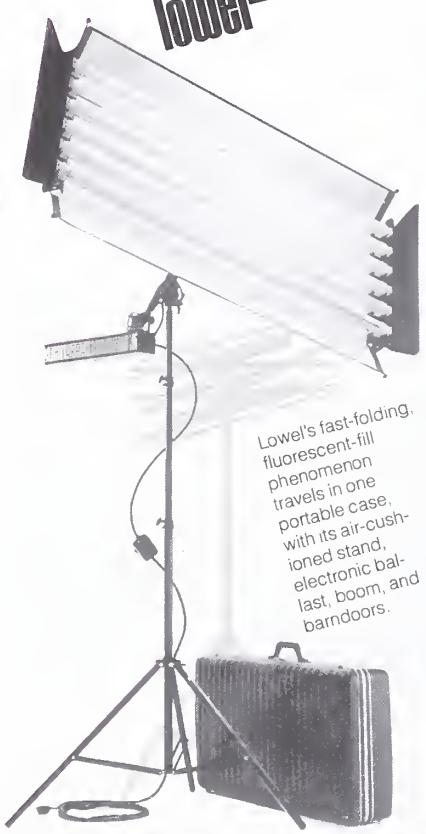
COVER: Because business practices within the video trade are not widely discussed, many producers remain in the dark about the facts of distribution—what kind of income ta expect, what to laak for in a contract, what pramatianal strategies wark best and whether these are being used by their distributors. In "The Video Trade," the second af twa articles an nonbraadcast video distributian of independent work in the U.S., Renee Tajima sheds some light on these and other areas.

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LETTERS

DEALER'S CHOICE

To the editor:

Eric Breitbart's review of *Off-Hollywood: The Making & Marketing of American Specialty Films* [August/September 1987] was quite puzzling. While basically positive, the review failed to grasp the study's purpose and could well have left many readers in confusion. *Off-Hollywood* is an attempt to demystify a small part of the film business. It does this by demystifying "the deal" or series of "deals" that define the life of a film. The deal is the glue that binds not only a film together, but the industry as well. It is the stuff of lore and legend; it is what moguls are made of. No wonder hard information about film deals remains proprietary. Nevertheless, deals are the decision-making tree that all filmmakers must climb in order to get *their* film made, *their* film distributed, *their* film shown.

Our goal in writing *Off-Hollywood* was to detail the deal-making process of 11 quite different films. These films, and all indies by definition, share one thing in common: they are, in the words of Jivan Tabibian (a member of Sundance's Marketing Advisory Committee), "undercapitalized business ventures." As such, they are fundamentally different in nature from projects launched by a studio or established indie producer. From Rodeo Drive to Park Slope, all independent producers are essentially boutique manufacturers. Their product is intended to fill a pipeline that passes through a distributor to a local retailer (an exhibitor) before it reaches the consumer. Unfortunately, many filmmakers have only a dim understanding of the commercial context through which their film will find an audience. Therefore, to understand how deals are constituted is to grasp the real heart of the film business. Above all, *Off-Hollywood* demonstrates clearly that deals are not frozen contracts. Rather, each deal is a terrain that embodies personal and commercial relationships and is fought with all kinds of emotion and power struggles. Deals shift from film to film and from year to year.

Because Breitbart failed to grasp this central point, he failed to comprehend the methodology employed. Each case study is a detailed reconstruction of the pivotal deals in the life of a film based on information provided by the participants. We assumed that our core readers would be first-time filmmakers, students, and others interested in the business of independent film. Thus, we assumed not only a certain seriousness of intent due to the economic imperatives motivating them, but also a critical position on their part toward the commercial realities they have to face. We consciously chose not to impose our views upon the reader, but to allow him or her to find their own way through the mass of information provided by the dozens of interviewees who cooperated in preparing the study.

One final correction to Breitbart's review. He wrongly states: "It is a telling comment that most of the filmmakers in *Off-Hollywood* have not made another feature since those covered in the study were released." I guess Breitbart hasn't been to the movies recently: John Sayles has come out with *Lianna, Baby It's You, Brother From Another Planet* and *Matewan*; Dick Pearce has made *Country* and *No Mercy*; Greg Nava and Anna Thomas are coming out with *Destiny*; Paul Bartel has made *Lust in the Dust* among others, and Bob Young released *Saving Grace, Extremities* and *Dominick & Eugene* will be out shortly. And this is not a complete roster of the continuing achievement of the dozens of directors, producers and actors who actively contributed to the writing of *Off-Hollywood*.

—David Rosen
New York, NY

Eric Breitbart replies:

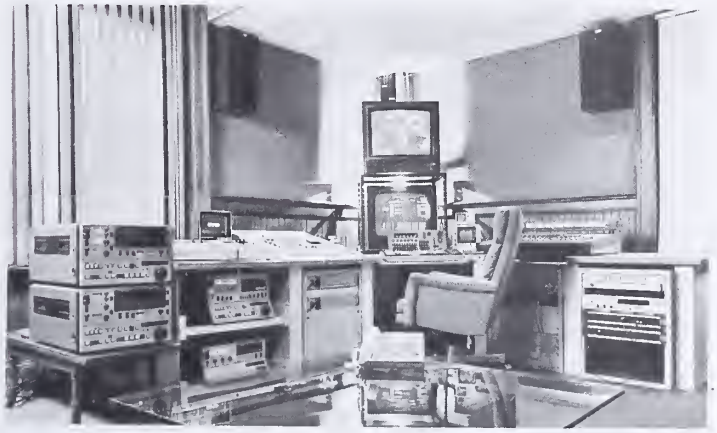
I appreciate David Rosen's taking the time to explain the goals of a book whose purpose may have been unclear to other readers aside from me. Saying that deal-making is the key to feature film production, however, seems less than a major revelation. What *is* important is being able to apply timely, accurate information to one's own projects, and for this, first-time filmmakers *in particular* need the kind of analysis the book lacks. If the book's purpose is helping people "climb the distribution tree," *Off-Hollywood*'s ladder has a few rungs missing.

As for Rosen's final "correction": I do go to the movies, but I don't usually get to see films before they are released. I'd intended to underline the difficulties in getting films made, not to slight the achievements of independent producers. If "more than half" makes Rosen feel better than "most," I'm happy to accept the change.

I understand the role of economics in the filmmaking business, but I'm not so sure how helpful it is for independents to see themselves as "boutique manufacturers" filling "a pipeline." Those who do might be better off making gourmet ice cream or growing hydroponic lettuce. I'm also naïve enough to believe that independents have other things in common than being "undercapitalized business ventures," and that most independent films get made because their producers or directors feel deeply about their projects.



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THE SEARCHERS: INTERNATIONAL AGENCY OPENS

When one of Bill Moyer's field producers needed some fast background information on a couple of arcane figures involved in the Iran-Contragate hearings, she called up a new progressive research center for help. In a couple of hours Research International pulled together a package of clippings and background material, culled from the specialized and commercial computer databases to which they subscribe. Alongside the journalists, researchers, and producers who have recently begun using the resources of this nonprofit, New York-based service are several international and quasi-governmental agencies. These include UNESCO, which has commissioned a book on the history of the New World Information and Communication Order and the U.S. government's response to it, and Research and Consultancy, a new agency in Zimbabwe connected to the Non-Aligned Movement, which will be headquartered in that country for the next two years. Research International not only plans to provide on-going research for the Zimbabwean group, but will also help set them up, providing training in the use of research resources, computers, telecommunications, and facsimile equipment.

Research International incorporated only last March, and has not yet advertised its services. So far most of the dozen or so clients who have used Research International—mainly print journalists—knew about it through word of mouth or through their familiarity with the project's parent organization, the Institute for Media Analysis. IMA has been active for several years as a media watchdog organization and publisher of books on media, propaganda, and disinformation. It was founded in 1985 by journalist/filmmaker Ellen Ray and attorney/journalist William Schaap, also the coeditors of *Covert Action Bulletin*, and Edward Herman, writer and professor of finance at the University of Pennsylvania. They were subsequently joined by John Simon, formerly general manager of Pacifica radio station WBAI.

One of the advantages Research International offers the journalists, producers, academics, governmental, and nongovernmental agencies it hopes to attract is its breadth of sources—both print and people. Mainstream U.S. interpretations of news events are easy enough to find through the *New York Times Index* and similar resources at public libraries. Move away from the consensus press, however, and the job of tracking and obtaining information becomes much more difficult. Research International makes material available from small press publications, left-wing papers, brochures, and other unusual sources that normally fall outside the acquisition parameters of libraries and research centers. Further, it provides access to mainframe databases, which can produce bibliographies, texts, and summaries from newspapers, magazines, specialized journals, and wire services, as well as round up sources on transnational corporations, foundations, religious groups, and personalities. Access to such databases is often too expensive for freelance journalists and independent producers and difficult to obtain in third world countries.

Schaap says that they will "probably not" archive film or television material. If, however, a client needs information from or about these areas—say, the sentences CBS deleted from an interview with a Sandinista official—then they might be able to scout out something. In doing research for the UNESCO book, for example, they were able to obtain transcripts for virtually all of the networks' UNESCO-related stories and out-takes—a feat made possible only by their having inside sources.

Supplementing Research International's strength in printed materials is a worldwide network of personal contacts which IMA has developed, giving clients both increased access to international viewpoints as well as to the expertise of specialists on subjects ranging from neo-Nazism to the Trilateral Commission. Some of these specialists are hired to research particular projects; others are already on the board of advisors, including Noam Chomsky, Xavier Chamorro Cardenal, Ramsey Clark, Alexander Cockburn, DeeDee Halleck, Michael Parenti, and Herbert Schiller, among other journalists, filmmakers, academics, and publishers.

Chairing the IMA board is Nobel Peace Prize laureate Sean McBride. In 1980 McBride headed up the UNESCO-appointed commission that investigated the global information imbalance and ultimately came up with the New World Information and Communication Order. IMA's interest in this proposal, which urges nations to develop indigenous communications organizations and counterbalance the one-way flow of information from developed nations, is direct. In the brochure introducing Research International, IMA states that the organization "views its own work, including that of Research International, as a modest part of [the NWICO's] implementation. In particular the Institute is committed to countering the lack of information and the lack of appropriate coverage by which the most powerful nations manipulate and control the flow of information."

In addition to several new publishing projects related to media and disinformation, IMA is also developing a video distribution initiative, still in its early planning stages. To date, the IMA has produced one tape—a debate between Schaap and *New York Times Sunday Week in Review* editor William Borders on the *Times*' coverage of international affairs. The video is being marketed this fall to educational institutions through a direct mail query, as has been the case with IMA's publications. In Schaap's experience, the more fare offered, the better the direct mail response. The IMA has every intention of expanding this project to include short preexisting tapes by independent producers on subjects related to propaganda, disinformation, and the media. As Schaap acknowledges, many such works already exist. Once IMA works out a reasonable funding and distribution mechanism, he says, they will announce a call for tapes.

PATRICIA THOMSON

ONE AND ONE EQUALS THREE

Two major New York-based distributors of social-political issue films, First Run Features and Icarus Films, have joined forces, creating a new nontheatrical distribution company called First Run/Icarus Films. Because the parent companies will continue to remain in business, the result is a total of three distribution companies rather than one merged entity. The new company opened its doors in August, starting out with a collection of 250 documentaries, fiction, and animated films. First Run/Icarus will also be acquiring films independently of the parent companies, which will continue to exist separately and distribute to theatrical, television, and home video markets.

Merging the nontheatrical divisions of First Run and Icarus has been talked about "for some time," according to Seymour Wishman, president of First Run and cochair of First Run/Icarus together with Jonathan Miller, president of Icarus Films. Because the two companies "have similar kinds of customers and similar libraries of films, it makes sense to combine customer lists and work out of one operation," explains Wishman. First Run/Icarus will be run out of Icarus' office, whose personnel has expanded from Miller and two part-time assistants to a full-time staff of four. While pooling databases and office resources should help eliminate the redundancy of separate marketing efforts, it should also help expand the cus-

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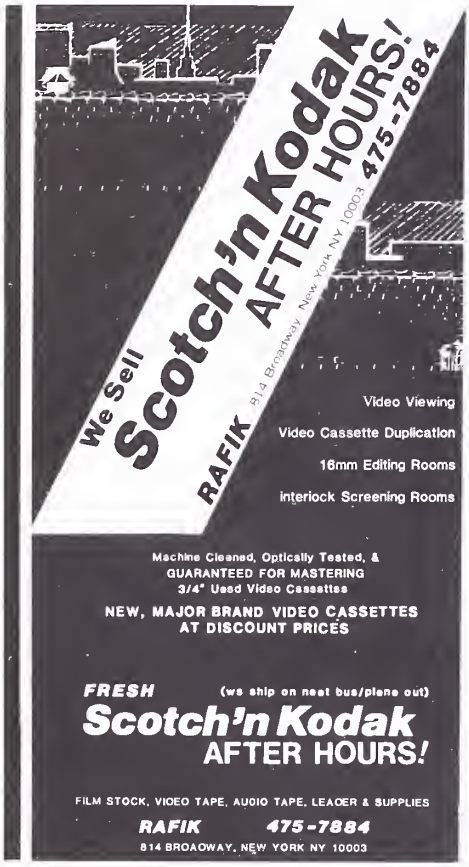


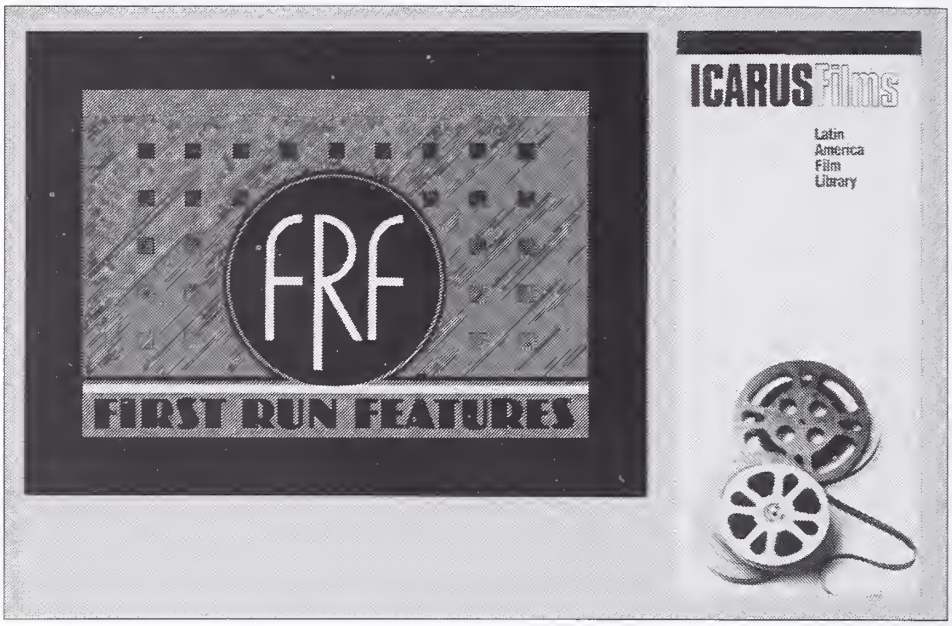
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tomer base for both companies—if all goes according to plan. Not only will each acquire new customers from the other company's list, but together they should attract new business because of their mutually strengthened collections. Icarus is simultaneously pursuing the international television market through another new company, Icarus Films International.

While both distributors deal primarily with independently produced social issue and political films, each has its own profile and strengths. As its name indicates, First Run Features focuses more on feature-length productions, handling such titles as *The Good Fight, 28 Up, The Wobblies, Born in Flames,* and *The Man Who Envied Women.* It has a substantial collection of labor history and Jewish studies films. Icarus has a greater concentration of shorter documentaries and strong holdings in Latin American and African films. These different emphases in their collections are reflected in their respective markets and in the recent division of labor with the creation of First Run/Icarus. The merger frees up First Run Features to concentrate wholly on theatrical and semi-theatrical rentals and sales (including film societies and other large screenings with admission) which make up 80 percent of its business. About the same proportion of Icarus' sales and rental, in comparison, have come from the nontheatrical market.

All three companies will be signing on new films individually. How this will work in practice remains to be seen. As of September, no contracts have been negotiated directly with the new First Run/Icarus. But according to Miller, First Run/Icarus will handle not only the nontheatrical distribution of the films it signs on, but also their theatrical, semi-theatrical, television, and home video distribution. Both parent companies' releases will receive only nontheatrical (and, in Icarus' case, semi-theatrical) distribution through First Run/Icarus.

A catalogue of First Run/Icarus' 47 new releases appeared in September, which will be followed by a comprehensive catalogue scheduled for publication early next year. Specialized subject brochures will also continue to be published, reflecting the augmented collections. In all cases the catalogue listings will make no distinction between the three different companies' films. Summing up the reason for the joint venture, Wishman said, "It will be better for the filmmakers—they'll have a larger customer base. And it will also be better for the two companies, which should both get more business. It will be more than the sum of its parts."

PT

NEW WORK

The curator of video and film at the Kitchen in New York City, **Amy Taubin**, resigned recently; the Kitchen plans to announce Taubin's replacement in late September. The Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston's video curator, **Bob Riley**, will depart ICA in January 1988. On the West Coast, the Long Beach Museum of Art hired **Jacqueline Kain** as curator of media exhibitions and ancillary programs. San Francisco's public TV station KQED appointed **Chloe Aaron** director of cultural programming. Back East, the Collective for Living Cinema in New York named a new executive director, **Jack Walsh**. **Peter Solomon** has taken over the helm of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers in Washington, D.C. **Peter Biskind**, editor of *American Film* for a number of years, was hired as an executive editor for Rupert Murdoch's new film magazine *Premiere*. His replacement is **Susan Linfield**, formerly senior editor at *American Film*. And taking her place is **Debra Goldman**. Both Linfield and Goldman previously worked as associate editors of *The Independent*.


THE INDEPENDENT



SEQUELS

Bucking a trend of recent rulings supporting **cable franchise provisions** ["Cable Company Loses in Erie," July 1987], two California courts have sided with cable company plaintiffs and struck down city franchise requirements. In *Century Federal v. Palo Alto* a federal judge declared that public access, universal service, and construction of state of the art cable systems are unconstitutional requirements. A short time thereafter the district court in Santa Cruz threw out the city's public access and universal service requirements on First Amendment grounds. Although these provisions are upheld in the Cable Communications Act of 1984, neither judge found the Cable Act itself unconstitutional—an inconsistency a defense attorney for Palo Alto called "intellectually dishonest."

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FRANCO-AMERICAN FILM FETE



Although the Société Française de Producion came through with funding for Jill Godmilow's *Waiting for the Moon*, the film was never granted French nationality and thus is not officially a French-American coproduction.

Photo: Maryse Alberti

Karin Halperin

For some, Avignon, a small French southern town, with its vestiges of Roman arcades, winding medieval cobblestone streets, and assortment of mimes and musicians performing on the Place de l'Horloge, could be a movie set. And any locale that so easily accommodates the fourteenth-century Popes Palace and McDonalds certainly seems like an appropriate home for the French-American Film Workshop. Created in 1983 as an auxiliary program of the French-American Center of Provence, the Workshop is a nonprofit French organization committed to assisting French independent cinema in the United States, and U.S. independent cinema in France. "I thought it would be interesting as an American living in France to bring together the kind of films and filmmakers I most admired, those that were called at the time independent," explains Jerome Rudes, founder and managing director of the Workshop, a native Texan who has lived in Europe for 16 years. "France and the United States are two leading film producing countries, and although they've both had a tremendous impact on each other's cinema, they've also remained very distinct and separate. And so my idea was to create a crossroads of independent cinema from both countries."

A cosponsor with the Independent Feature Project and American Playhouse of le Salon du Cinéma Indépendent at the Cannes Film Festival this year [see "Media Clips," August/September 1987], the Workshop uncorked its special vintage Côtes du Rhône and held its own fourth annual Rencontres Cinématographiques Franco-Americaines between June 30 and July 5. A mix of screenings, meetings, roundtable discussions, and parties, the Rencontres Cinématographiques is meant to spotlight the work of independents, however broadly defined, and inspire cross-cultural exchange. This month, Rencontres comes to Manhattan, and will be held between November 16 and 21 at the Alliance Française.

Beginning as a weekend in 1984, Rencontres grew to six days within two years and has served as the Provençal screening room for such U.S. independent "classics" as *The Return of the Secaucus Seven*, *Brother from Another Planet*, *Stranger than Paradise*, *El Norte*, *Cold Feet*, *Blood Simple*, *Eating Raoul*, *Sherman's March*, and others. French selections have featured a 13-film retrospective of Louis Malle, who was guest of honor last year, Agnes Varda's *Documenteur* and *Ulysse*, as well as work by Jeanne Labrune, Didier Haudepin, Pomme Meffre, Caroline Roboh, Jean-Luc Trotignon, Gérard Frot-Coutaz, directors who are not known in the United States, and, in some cases, just barely in France. Many of the French and U.S. directors whose films are shown come to Avignon to participate.

Rudes, a former teacher and journalist with a masters degree in film and television from Northwestern University, emphatically explains that the Rencontres is neither a festival nor a market, even though it combines aspects of both. Neither is it a strictly industry event, but is open to students (New Perspectives in French and American Cinema, a three-week university level seminar course ties in with Rencontres,) scholars, and those who just love movies. The entire week in Avignon is structured to encourage informal networking.

Daily café terrace breakfasts and after-hours gatherings, cocktail parties, lunches, brunches, book signings, and an outdoor, all-night Fourth of July celebration take place around the 11 or so screenings a day. More formal meetings and discussions are also scheduled.

This summer's meeting brought directors Samuel Fuller, Jerry Schatzberg, and Michel Deville as special guests of honor, and in addition to retrospectives of their works, 24 other films were shown, including 12 shorts and one video documentary. Joining them were French directors Laurent Perrin with *Buisson Ardent* and Geneviève Lefebvre with *Le Jupon Rouge*, both of which were in this year's Perspectives on French Cinema sidebar at Cannes, U.S. director Tamar Simon Hoffs with *The Allnighter* and her short, *The Haircut* (with John Cassavetes), and producer Sandra Schulberg with *Waiting for the Moon*. Such stellar attractions as *Barfly* and *True Stories*, which help pull the summer tourists to the late-night outdoor screenings in the 500-seat Ancien Palais de l'Archêveché, were featured, as well as *Street Smart, And the Pursuit of Happiness, Someone to Love, Broken Noses*, and *Always*, topped off by a post-midnight screening of Harold Lloyd's *Safety Last*, with piano accompaniment.

Michel Poirier, whose company Les Films Singuliers exports and distributes features and documentaries, comes to Rencontres "to look for films and meet new people," and is handling foreign sales from Glenn Silber's *Troupers*, shown last year. For Jean-Pierre Jackson, president of Sinfonia Films, the main draw is "the opportunity to see independent American films." Jackson, who's known primarily for having brought the work of Russ Meyers and John Waters to France, has broadened the scope of his acquisitions to include *'Night Mother*, the Canadian *I've Heard the Mermaids Singing*, and a Belgian documentary on Charlie Parker. Both Poirier and Jackson like the small, intimate ambience of Rencontres, but think that the U.S. portion of the program could be much stronger and that the Workshop could go much further in presenting more of the unseen and unknown. "There were very few films here this year without distributors," comments Poirier. "I really liked *Waiting for the Moon*," says Jackson, "but it would be too difficult to release theatrically in France. Theatrical release is becoming a privilege." Jackson feels there's probably great talent in U.S. film schools and would like to see some of these student films brought to Avignon. "This is very important," he says, "because for any kind of festival to really function, it must permit discoveries."

Maybe what Jackson has in mind are more Workshop premieres on the order of *On the Tracks of a Filmmaker*, a 52-minute video documentary on Henry Jaglom, made by French actress Nelly Alard during her first trip to Hollywood. Whether you're a fan of Jaglom's or not, the video is an appealing and remarkable display of how to work with no resources and how to turn every mishap to your advantage. "This was not a low-budget film, but a no-budget film, and I was the entire crew," says Alard. It interweaves interviews with Bob Rafelson, Dennis Hopper, Peter Bogdanovich, Karen Black, and others, and outtakes of Orson Welles, with clips from Jaglom's films, but it is also something much more. Although originally trained as an engineer, this was Alard's first experience behind a video camera. "My first idea was to make a very straightforward documentary. But from the beginning, everything went wrong." And so inadvertently, the video is in Jaglom's improvisational style, with all of the mistakes and accidents built in, and is as much about Alard's struggle to make it as it is about Henry Jaglom.

Six very loosely structured panels treated such questions as how to define an independent; what makes a film memorable; whether international coproductions, in their need to sell in so many markets, impose too many compromises on the story; the influence of television on the subject, style, and aesthetics of filmmaking; how to develop more film fans; what will cinema be like in the next century. These roundtables are reflective rather than concrete, and while they fuel lively debate, are short on solid, practical information. The problem is that more focused, industry-oriented seminars would probably alienate the general audience the Workshop wants to attract.

The opportunity seemed particularly lost this year. France is in the throes of enormous changes in its audio-visual sector, with the government's sale of TF-1, the largest of the three national networks last April (Antenne-2 and FR-3 remain state-controlled), and the creation of two commercial networks, La Cinq and Métropole-6, less than two years ago. La Sept, the government supported future European arts channel for direct satellite broadcast, is also new, and there's Canal Plus, the three-year-old pay cable service. It's nearly impossible in France to produce a film without television financing, and there is much concern among French independents as to whether these changes will mean a shift to more mainstream, commercial programming, and what they hold for the future of more modest, less conventional films. But the expansion also means a greater demand for material, and potential new outlets for work by U.S. independents. But no one was present from any French television network or station to address the possibilities of coproduction or advise on how they might market, distribute, or package their work for French TV. More useful, however, were the *rencontres* with individual directors, where it was possible to get an idea of how independent production and financing works in France. This becomes more opportune given the new initiative by the French industry and government for more coproduction between France and the United States.

The most basic difference is that the French film industry is government subsidized, and a great many first and second features, as well as those by more experienced directors, receive aid

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in the form of *avance-sur-recettes*, an interest free loan, made to the director of a production on the basis of a script submitted to a commission against future box office receipts. The advance, usually about one-third of the total budget, is repaid only if the film makes money. "It's a system that definitely encourages newcomers, allows some risk, even error, and is essential to a certain kind of film getting made," says Laurent Perrin. A former assistant editor at *Cahiers du Cinema*, Perrin worked as an assistant director and made five shorts, some award-winning, before directing his first film, *Passage Secret*, which was completed and screened at the Workshop in 1985. His current film, *Buisson Ardent*, was shown this year. He explains that by using the *avance* as a starting point, "We can build a modest budget of six-million francs [about $1-million], which is within the average range for us. We don't have studios, there are three or four well-known producers and companies like Gaumont and UGC which distribute. By arranging their own financial package, every director becomes in a sense a kind of producer."

Geneviève Lefebvre gave a more sober assessment by emphasizing that many films receive *avance-sur-recettes* and go no further. She worked as an assistant director, producer, and directed several shorts before making her first feature, *Le Jupon Rouge*. This year she received a fellowship from the American Film Institute. "I had an idea to speak of women in this picture, to tell a story of love, passion, personal friendship, desire, and possession between three women of three generations," she says. "I had great difficulty in getting support for this movie, I had many detractors, my biggest obstacle being that there weren't any men in it," continues Lefebvre. "It never could have been made without *avance-sur-recettes*, but it's never sufficient, and it's still very difficult to get the rest of the budget."

And Sandra Schulberg described how she tried, and failed, to get French financing for *Waiting for the Moon*. "*Waiting for the Moon* was always conceived to be shot in a New York loft. And it was only after I got involved that Jill [Godmilow, the film's director] and I began to talk about shooting it in France, because it seemed so obvious, that's where the story took place, and it would cost about the same." It also seemed a natural for a French-American coproduction. "So I spent a lot of time here—perhaps too much time considering what I got—trying to raise money, going through all of the steps to get the film French nationality in order to apply for *avance-sur-recettes*. I kept saying, 'This is a French film, we're going to make it here with a French crew, and use mostly French actors, and there's got to be French money available for this.'" But they were turned down for the government advance. The next step was to try the Soficas (Société de financement des industries cinématographiques et audiovisuelles), France's tax shelter companies that invest in film and television production. "I got a lot of encouragement from one, but it was at a time of total upheaval at the television networks, and I couldn't get a commitment for a presale. Without that guarantee the Sofica search came to naught." In the end, the SFP (Société Française de Producton), the huge state production facility (now semi-private), came in for a $200,000 in-kind deal. Although the SFP has coproduction credit, Schulberg explains, it's not an official coproduction registered as such with the National Cinema Center (CNC). "We gave back the French nationality, and it's an American film."

Some independent projects *have* worked as French-U.S. coproductions. When Pamela Berger, as associate professor of art history, turned producer to make a movie based on the obscure writings of a French thirteenth-century inquisitor, she knew that the money she could raise from U.S. cultural sources would never be enough. Since her story had French elements, she turned to France. Armed with nothing but an National Endowment for the Humanities development grant, she teamed up with Suzanne Schiffman, François Truffaut's long-time coscreenwriter, who agreed to direct it as her first film. A French and Swiss producer came into the production, which drew a little from almost every French funding source: *avance-sur-recettes*, Sofica, presales. The NEH support (the only U.S. money in the project) grew to $850,000, out of a total budget of close to $2.5-million. Shot last year in France in both an English and French version, the movie, entitled *Le Moine et la Sorciere*, opened in Paris in September. European Classics has picked up the film for U.S. distribution, and it will play in this country under the title *Sorceress*.

Although the Workshop was founded on the dual premise of helping U.S. and French independents gain greater visibility and wider distribution in each other's countries, it's important to note that although the director and assistant director Ellen Lampert are from the United States, as is Fifi Oscard, the vice president of the Workshop's board of directors, it is a French organization, with the major financial support coming from the French Ministry of Culture and Communication, the French National Cinema Center (CNC), and Unifrance Film International, the association that promotes French films abroad. The Florence J. Gould Foundation is the only current U.S. sponsor.

For the past three years, the Workshop has been able to send a group of little known French features and shorts, most of them screened at Rencontres, on a nine-month tour of museums, universities, and art houses across the U.S., concluding in New York with cable television broadcasts on the City University of New York's cable channel. In addition, with Unifrance paying for subtitling and travel expenses for the director, the Workshop sent the first French film ever to the Independent Feature Market in 1985 (Jeanne Labrune's *Part of the Other*). In 1986, the Workshop sent Gerard Frot-Coutaz's *Good Weather but Stormy Late This Afternoon* to the market, and as a result it found a distributor and had a limited engagement at the Film Forum in Manhattan.

"The United States is our second market," says Jacques Poitrenaud, assistant director of Unifrance, "but very few French films really do well there. The United States is a completely protectionist country. There's the language barrier, for one, as well as a tendency to regard all foreign films as *films d'auteurs*. And this year, in France too, we lost eight percent of cinema spectators, and for the first time ever, American movies captured a greater percentage of the box office than French. That's really something to think about. So this is why we support the Workshop. The Workshop doesn't have a large influence now, that's certain. But the university market is indispensable to us, as the students gain an awareness and appreciation for French films that stays with them forever, and the consequences of this become important later."

The post-Rencontres effort made for the U.S. independent films screened at the Workshop is considerably more modest. For the past two years, they've moved from Avignon to the French Cinémathèque in the Centre Georges Pompidou. In 1986, the program ran for five days, while this year, unfortunately, *Waiting for the Moon*, *Broken Noses*, *The Boy Who Could Fly*, *Always*, and *The Haircut* played only for a weekend.

Some U.S. independent films have found distributors as a result of being spotted in Avignon. Scott Goldstein's *Walls of Glass* was picked-up last year, and negotiations for French rights to *Brother from Another Planet* and for the sale to English cable television of Eagle Pennell's *Last Night at the Alamo*, began at Rencontres. *Eating Raoul* is reportedly also on the verge of French theatrical release as a result of its Avignon screening. But Rudes likes to think of the Workshop as playing a more indirect role. "We're catalysts. That's the word that keeps coming up, and that's the actual meaning of the Workshop. We bring people together in the most favorable conditions possible, let them find their way to each other, and lend a hand to projects we believe in." The Workshop underwrote the subtitling for *Walls of Glass* and *Cold Feet* and helped produce the French narration for *America and Lewis Hine*. They arrange special screenings, and act as a liaison throughout the year.

The general consensus is that the best reason to attend the Rencontres, either with or without a film, is for contacts. And perhaps Sam Fuller expresses it best. "I came here for three wonderful reasons," he says. "Sun, vacation, and to meet a lot of fresh faces. Avignon is also a great hide-out. Any kind of criminal could hide here amidst the heat, smiles, color, and umbrellas; all he'd have to do is mingle." And in case you haven't guessed, that's what the French-American Film Workshop's summer Rencontres is really all about.

Karin Halperin is a freelance writer and editor based in New York.

THE HOLY CITY'S CINEMATEQUE

With its lively arts scene and nightlife, Tel Aviv is undoubtedly the cultural capital of Israel. It is a city that caters to secular interests. Jerusalem, meanwhile, is steeped in history, in tradition, in religion. On any given evening, there will be more than twice as many films screening commercially in Tel Aviv than Jerusalem. By its very existence, then, the Jerusalem Film Center offers a most necessary—and occasionally controversial—alternative to its community. The center is patterned after London's National Film Theater. The latter is housed in a comfortable, modern edifice overlooking the Thames; the former is in a comfortable, modern edifice (that's actually a restored, century-old structure) beneath Jerusalem's Old City, Mount Zion, and the Judean hills. The center houses the Israel Film Archive, a library and museum, a division dedicated to Jewish film, a video/television department, and the Jerusalem Cinematheque, where on most days four films are scheduled in two venues.

The center's founder, director, and guiding force is Lia van Leer. With husband Wim, van Leer established Israel's first film club in Haifa over 30 years ago. In 1961 they began the Israel Film Archive, which currently holds over 7,000 titles, the largest film collection in the Middle East. (Tax write-offs may be obtained by filmmakers offering prints of their work, if they donate through the Jerusalem Foundation, located at 500 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10036.) Over the years, the van Leers started cinematheques in Haifa, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem. Finally, in 1981 came the culmination of their efforts on behalf of cinema: the opening of the Jerusalem Film Center.

Since then, van Leer has scheduled several comprehensive American independent series. Back in early 1983, for instance, Annette Michaelson brought over a package featuring works by artists like Hollis Frampton, Maya Deren, Michael Snow, and Robert Breer. During the summer of 1986 Bérénice Reynaud organized a program titled "American Independent Cinema." This consisted of over two dozen titles, from *Blood Simple* and *Born in Flames* to *Wild Style* and *Vortex*, along with shorts by Breer and George Griffin. Practically all screenings were national premieres. However, an independent may not only be scheduled at the cinematheque as part of a package. "Send me a cassette of your work," says van Leer. "Whatever you have available, 1/2-inch or 3/4-inch, VHS or BETA. Just mail it to me [at Box 8561, Jerusalem 91083, Israel]. If we like it, we'll be more than happy to schedule it. We are always pleased to screen American independents."

Van Leer is also independent-minded in her management of the cinematheque. Recently, she inaugurated Friday night screenings—a daring move in a city that becomes a ghost town on the



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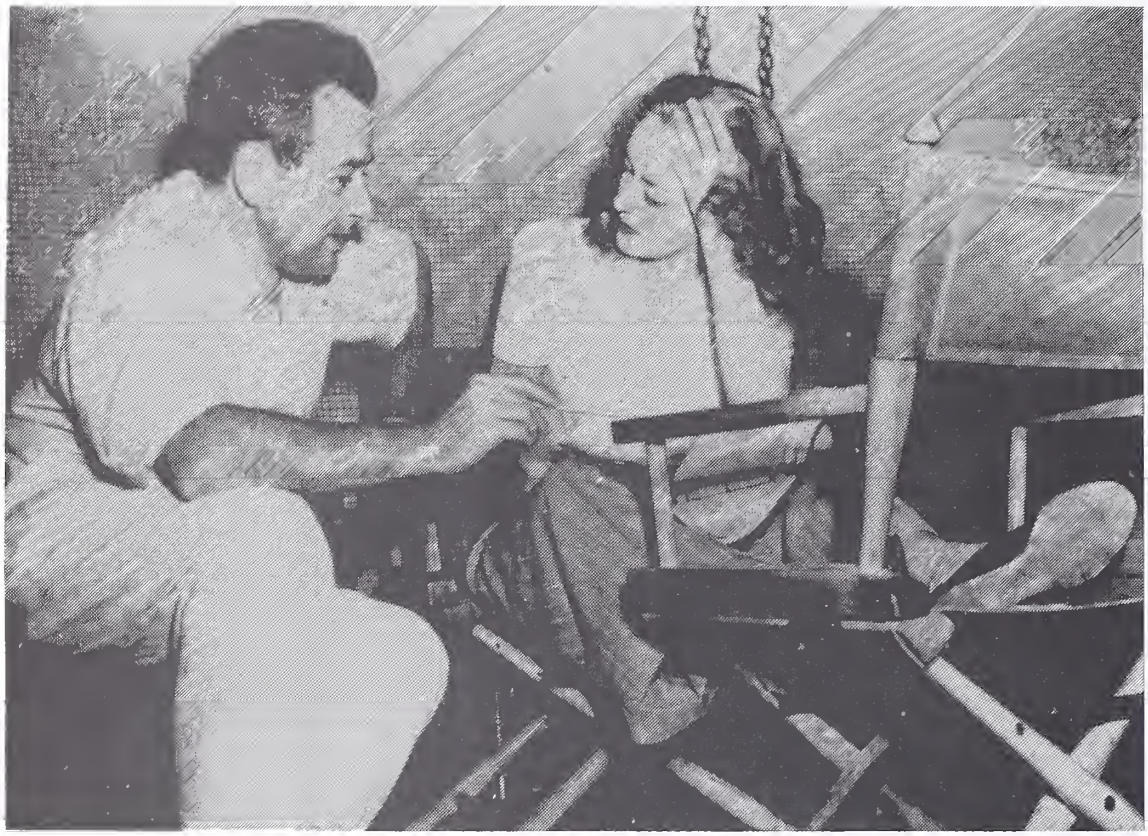


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Aviva Slesin's *Directed by William Wyler* is among the many U.S. independent films that Lia van Leer has brought to the Jerusalem Film Festival and the Jerusalem Film Center.

Courtesy filmmaker

Sabbath, but a welcome alternative for those who do not flee to Tel Aviv at the end of the work week yet who want cultural rather than religious enlightenment. This action met with a vocal, potentially violent protest from Jerusalem's Jewish orthodox right. For as long as van Leer could maintain the necessary political support, she intends to adhere to the new schedule.

Van Leer is also director of the Jerusalem Film Festival, held in the center during the first weeks of summer, which in 1987 celebrated its fourth anniversary with a program of 120 films. A healthy sampling of U.S. independents were scheduled here. Predictably but appropriately, there was a focus on films with Jewish themes, from Lori Perlow's *Witnesses to the Holocaust: The Trial of Adolph Eichmann* and Robert Gardner's *The Courage to Care* to Peter Davis' *The Rise and Fall of the Borscht Belt* and Steve Gomer's *Sweet Lorraine*. But a wide variety of other films could be found: Lizzie Borden's *Working Girls*; Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It*; Aviva Slesin's *Directed by William Wyler*; Henry Jaglom's *Someone to Love*; Beth B's *Salvation*; Doris Chase's *Dear Papa*; Keva Rosenfeld's *All American High*; Laurie Anderson's *Home of the Brave*; and Barbara Margolis' *Are We Winning Mommy? America and the Cold War*. "We go out of our way to bring in films that won't be screened commercially in Israel," van Leer explains. "This is our policy both for the festival and the cinematheque. I'm particularly interested in films by young directors from the United States and Europe whose work has never been seen here. I want to make discoveries, to allow our audiences to experience films they could never otherwise have the opportunity to see. So many films today are about nothing. I prefer the ones that offer different views of the world, that attempt to ask the basic questions about why we are here on this planet and what we are doing with our lives.

"Only about nine or 10 of the features at the festival will automatically be screened in Israeli cinemas," she continues. "But now Israeli distributors seem to be beginning to show interest in buying up the rights to some of the other films. This is slowly beginning to happen. In previous years, *Koyaanisqatsi* and *Stranger than Paradise* received theatrical openings as a result of their festival screenings. Also, distributors are now taking out options on films and then checking out the audience reaction when they're screened at the cinematheque. The distributors don't mind if we show a film first. In fact, they generally prefer us to screen the films they're interested in. If it's a good film, it will receive lots of good publicity and word of mouth. The distributors know that this will only help the film when it comes out commercially."

Van Leer sees distinct similarities between the films made under the Paramount or Orion logo and those produced by individuals without studio backing. "Quality-wise," she believes, "they're no different from the current output of Hollywood films. Some are good. Some are bad. Some are in between. It's just that they will generally have lower budgets and will not feature top American stars. For too long, independent films were collectively written off as being avant-garde, as being the types of films only a select few will ever want to see. But, of course, most are ordinary, traditional films. In this regard, *Smithereens* is a perfect example. Despite its look and subject matter, it's *not* avant-garde. Susan Seidelman was very easily able to transfer her film sense when she began making bigger budget features [*Desperately Seeking Susan* and *Making Mister Right*]. We screened *Smithereens* here, and it got an excellent response. So have many of the other independents we've already shown. And so will those that we'll show in the future."

ROB EDELMAN

Rob Edelman programs Home Film Festival, a mail order video club offering tapes for rental.

CAVEAT DOCUMENTOR

Paula Schaap

[Author's note: This article is presented only for the purpose of educating the independent producer and is not to be taken as legal advice. The independent film or videomaker should, therefore, always consult an attorney before undertaking any course that may have legal ramifications.]

Fans of Wheeler Dealer and Cinema Verite—the duo is back, and, to the amazement of those following their careers, they have joined forces to produce Verite's documentary feature film. This unusual combination was born when, at a post-preview party for downtown independent Rat Mudd's latest release, *Suck 'Em Up Vampires*, Wheeler spotted Verite and fell instant prey to the bane of humankind's existence: love. Of course, Verite took one look at Wheeler's five gold chains and silver BMW and blew him off. Not to be dismissed so lightly—we are talking about the man who made three slasher and one teenage beach film before he finished film school—Wheeler offered to produce Verite's documentary. He winced hard when she told him that the subject of the film was male chauvinism in the film industry, but, to his credit, he took the assignment. There have been stranger partnerships. So Wheeler, as a conscientious producer, appeared in my office to determine if there were special legal issues that would affect Verite as a documentary filmmaker. (Wheeler: "Who needs that ambulance chaser? She always tells me I can't do what I'm gonna do anyway." Verite: "Go, or there won't be anything to wrap your chains around.")

The primary legal issue that affects documentaries is releases. The general rule is easy: Always get releases. But since Wheeler is already yelling, "Didn't they have a course on loopholes at your lousy law school?" I will forestall his tantrum by pointing out that, like every general rule, this one has its exceptions. Releases act as protection for the filmmaker if a subject of a film later claims that his or her image was used without consent. Although oral consent can be valid, it may be difficult to prove. A written and signed release is the best form of proof that the person has given his or her consent.

Ed Gray, a producer at Obenhaus Films, Inc., has produced five documentaries for *Frontline* as well as documentaries for PBS's *Great Performances*. His most recent production is *The Politics of Greed*, a documentary about the New York City corruption scandal involving Donald Manes and Stanley Friedman. His response to the issue of releases is that he is extremely careful to obtain them. "It's good filmmaking. It gives the filmmaker the discipline to provide people with the information about the filmmaking process that they deserve," he stated. Gray pointed out that most people equate being in front of a camera with a few minutes on the evening news. Explaining a release form to prospective subjects clarifies the purpose and intent of the film for both the filmmaker and the people appearing in the film.

The only exception Gray makes is for public officials who are commenting in their public capacities. Even in the case of junior staff members for that public official, he makes sure he has releases. As Gray noted, public figures, by virtue of having been in the limelight, are considered by the law to have surrendered some of their rights to privacy. Not all their rights, however. Public figures, once they are offstage, have the same right to privacy as anyone else. Nevertheless, given the recent contretemps concerning a presidential candidate, the issue of whether public figures are newsworthy in the private sphere of their lives remains open to debate. (Wheeler: "You want a President who can't get chicks?" Verite: "Couldn't you have thought of something else to say to a NOW board member?")

Although this article does not equate documentary filmmaking with filmed news reporting, people working in these two areas often confront the same questions. For example, if people are being filmed during a crisis, can the documentarian forego releases? And what happens if the filmmaker is in a crisis situation that, under most definitions, would be considered newsworthy, and someone refuses to be filmed? Should the



As *The Politics of Greed*'s producer, Ed Gray, points out, the reporters surrounding Bronx pol Stanley Friedman, here on his way to a Connecticut courthouse, do not need releases. Under the law public officials such as Friedman automatically surrender many of their rights to privacy.

Photo: Kathy Milani

filmmaker stop? What about those dim figures in the background, as opposed to a person whose features are clearly recognizable? Again, in the ideal world, the filmmaker obtains releases from everyone. However, the situations described are judgment calls and should be left to the good sense and principles of the filmmaker. The factors to be considered are: the status of the subjects, that is, whether they are public or private individuals, the newsworthiness of the story, and the end use of the footage.

Special situations require special treatment. Victoria Mudd and Maria Florio, the producer/directors of *Broken Rainbow*, ran into such a situation. *Broken Rainbow* is a film about a government relocation project for a community of Navajo native Americans living in Arizona. While the government claims that the relocation is necessary to settle a land dispute between the Navajos and the Hopis, the thesis of *Broken Rainbow* is that relocation is being used to serve the needs of energy development interests. "We had a special problem [with releases] because of the sensitivity of native Americans to having been swindled in the past. Often we were uncomfortable asking them to sign releases, because these non-English speaking people have been deceived by white people who tried to get them to sign documents they didn't understand." Mudd explained. The filmmakers, however, had the full cooperation of the native Americans who appeared in the film because "they viewed it as one of the few ways they could get the word out about what was happening to them." Releases were obtained, however, from all the non-native Americans in the film.

What should go into a release? Ed Gray thinks that the simpler, the better. "I'm grateful that the releases for WGBH are getting simpler. Lawyers aren't in real situations." The language of the release, at the minimum, should give the filmmaker the right to use the person's image, likeness, and voice in the film. For advertising and ancillary distribution purposes, the release should also permit the use of the footage in any form, in any media, in perpetuity.

A person must be competent in order to give a valid release. This means that if there is any question about a person's ability to understand the significance of a release the filmmaker should exercise extra caution. For those who speak another language, the release should be in that language, or an interpreter should sign a statement that the release has been explained to the subject in his or her language. If a child is involved, a parent or legal guardian must sign the release. If the child is of an age where he or she can understand the release form, the filmmaker may also want his or her signature. In most states, 18 is the age of majority for most purposes, but the filmmaker should check local law.

A relatively new practice has been to have the subject of a film give his or her release on film. In recent years, films and videotapes have become



The Navajo people appearing in the documentary *Broken Rainbow* were reluctant to sign release forms—the result of too many raw deals throughout their history stemming from their signing English-language documents they did not understand.

Photo: Maria Florio, courtesy filmmakers

an accepted form of legal evidence, although, as far as I am aware, the validity of filmed releases has not been tested. Filmed releases should not be considered superior to written releases, since it is the content of the release that is important, not the medium. Whether or not to get a filmed release depends, therefore, on convenience and production needs, rather than purely legal considerations.

The issues discussed above deal with the relationship of the film producer to the filmed subject. A filmmaker has other relationships to consider, however, such as the use of the film or its subjects by others. Mitch Block of Direct Cinema, a Los Angeles distribution company, stated that he would like to see more of his documentary producers protect themselves from use of their filmed subjects in fiction or news films without input, compensation, or credit to the documentarian. He suggested that, in addition to the standard release, the documentary filmmaker try to secure nonfiction rights to the subject's life as depicted in the film for at least five years, the option to make a fiction film based upon the life of the subject, the rights to a book version of the film, and the right to excerpt the film and to resell stock footage.

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Another issue of concern to documentary filmmakers is how to obtain not-for-profit status and what to do with it when you get it. Since documentaries are often funded through public or private grants, it is important for the filmmaker to establish not-for-profit status. Indeed, some funding organizations will only give grants to a project that has not-for-profit status. To obtain this status, the producer must apply to the IRS to be treated as a not-for-profit entity or receive funding through a fiscal sponsor. (For an in-depth discussion of the laws concerning not-for-profit corporations, see Paula Schaap, "Financial Set-ups: The Not-for-Profit," *The Independent*, May 1984, and "Commercial Breaks: Profits, Nonprofits, Taxes," *The Independent*, October 1985.) Not-for-profit status is desirable for several reasons. First, it allows contributors to take a charitable tax deduction. Not-for-profit organizations can apply to be exempt from certain kinds of local taxes, such as sales tax. One thing to remember about obtaining non-profit status from the IRS, or 501(c)(3) status as it is called after its tax law section number, is that it takes time. An application for 501(c)(3) consideration should be carefully prepared with the assistance of a lawyer or accountant and may take up to a year for approval. Thus, the filmmaker may want to seriously consider obtaining a fiscal sponsor for reasons of convenience as well as other reasons.

Fiscal sponsors act as umbrella organizations. Contributions for a particular project are funneled through the fiscal sponsor which has its own 501(c)(3) exemption for itself and its sponsored projects. Once the filmmaker has a fiscal sponsor, therefore, he or she will have the benefits of tax-exempt status without having to make an individual application. In addition, fiscal sponsors often provide services for their sponsored projects, particularly accounting services. The sponsor takes a percentage of the monies donated to run its own operations and as a fee for the services provided to its sponsored projects. The percentage varies, so the filmmaker should check before applying for sponsorship.

□ □ □

Documentaries often employ archival footage as historical background, news comment, or as the primary documentary material. Using other people's footage raises problems of ownership rights and releases. Bob Summers, a film archivist, has found that filmmakers don't understand that there is a distinction between copyrights and property rights. "Material may be in the public domain," he stated, "but if it is owned by someone, the producer has to deal with the owner." For example, a film owned by the Donnell Library may be in the public domain, but copying the footage without the permission of the library will probably be an invalid use.

Waking Up to Rape, a documentary about women dealing with the aftermath of rape, illustrates this issue. The producer/director of *Waking Up to Rape*, Meri Weingarten, interviewed rape victims for the film. Some of the crimes had received local news coverage, and Weingarten

wanted to obtain some of the news footage. She found that the response to her request differed from station to station: one station was very cooperative while the other refused to give her permission to use the footage, even for a price. As with all rights clearances, filmmakers should never plan a film assuming that permission to use material will be granted, even if they can afford to pay. Private archives charge a fee plus duplicating costs. If footage is secured from the federal government, Summers stated, and if it has been donated to the archives free of restrictions, then the only cost will be duplication. If restrictions have been placed on film found in a government archive, the filmmaker will have to clear the use of the film with the donor.

Since independent producers usually work within limited budgets, one of their most common legal questions is whether, in some circumstances, they can use creative property which is owned by others without paying a fee. What they are referring to is an exception to the copyright law called the "fair use" exception. The copyright law states that someone who is sued for copyright infringement can defend him or herself by proving that the use of the copyrighted material was "fair use" if it was used for "criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching...scholarship, or research." Although the statutory categories appear to be clear-cut, the application of the fair use allowance is somewhat more complicated.

For example, let's say Verite films an interview with a producer who claims that he is free of any bias against women in his hiring practices. Verite is aware of a television interview in which the same producer made several statements along the "barefoot and pregnant" line about women in the film industry. If Verite cannot clear the use of the TV interview, would her use of the footage fall into the comment, scholarship, or news reporting categories of the fair use exception? Is her use of the footage defensible at all? The late professor Melville Nimmer, the foremost authority on copyright law, outlined the factors that the courts take into account when they deal with the fair use exception: the purpose and character of the use, including whether the use is commercial or non-profit educational; the nature of the copyrighted work; the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and the effect of the use upon the potential market for the copyrighted work. Or, to put it another way, another legal scholar Joseph McDonald parodied the Golden Rule: "Take not from others to such an extent and in such a manner that you would be resentful if they so took from you."

Filmmakers, however, should not depend on the "fair use" exception since its application has been very narrow. The best rule for using copyrighted materials is the same as for releases: Always clear the rights. Nevertheless, this maxim is for the ideal world. You have to be conservative in your choices, but at times, when the filmmaker is in one of the grey legal areas, he or she will have to rely on good sense and legal counsel to get the film made without running too great a risk of infringing on other people's rights. (Wheeler: "She's gone crazy. I made it. I own it!" Verite: "Poor thing. They say she never recovered from that Bar Committee investigation." Wheeler: "Our holier-than-thou lawyer? What for?" Verite: "Something about loopholes in a film production deal...")

Paula Schaap is an attorney and graduate film student at Columbia University.

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THE VIDEO TRADE
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Renee Tajima

It's like the Dark Ages in Europe with big monasteries that keep arcane knowledge. When you make the pilgrimage to those monasteries, they pass on what they know and try to keep the light flickering. But outside of their confines, the light disappears. There's not a whole lot of traffic in video.

—curator Neil Seiling

[Ed.'s note: This is the second in Renee Tajima's two-part series on nonbroadcast video distribution. "Part 1: The Distributors," in the October issue of The Independent, *described the structures and functions of various distributors, especially the three oldest nonprofit video distribution entities which are also those with the largest collections: the Video Data Bank, Electronic Arts Intermix, and the Kitchen. The article also discussed the influence of home video and self-distribution efforts, two topics that are further explored in the article below.]*

Video distribution is not a way to make a living. Top earners among the art distributors last year were the Video Data Bank and Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI) at around $150,000 total billing each. Neither budget could barely pay a 25-year-old investment banker one year's salary or cover production costs for a couple of broadcast quality tapes. Given these numbers, it's no surprise that artists fare just as poorly. Even well-known artists in the video scene earn only a drop in the bucket from rentals and sales of their tapes, especially from the traditional educational/cultural market of schools, museums, galleries, and libraries. Veteran videomaker Juan Downey estimates his annual income at approximately $5,000 royalties for close-circuit sales and rentals through EAI and perhaps another $5,000 for broadcast sales. Kit Fitzgerald can count on around $500 each quarter from EAI and less from the Kitchen, unless she gets a big broadcast sale. Robin O'Hara, head of the Kitchen's distribution service, finds that only four artists—"video stars" like Bill Viola and Robert Ashley—handled by her service receive between $6,000 and $8,000 per year apiece. Documentary producer Stevenson Palfi earns around $5,000 and $7,000 in nonbroadcast royalties from his four distributors: the Data Bank, the Museum of Modern Art, Flower Films, and Original Music, a music mail order house that, ironically, did just as much business for his tape as all the video distributors combined. What's the problem? Everyone cites money. But lack of money would be a problem for any business, and poverty usually signals flaws in the way the *business* is run. But, as Neil Seiling indicates in his statement above, video distribution is rarely referred to as a business at all, but more likely seen as a calling, a service. Only in recent years, as the language of arts funding has shifted from art-world to business-world accents, has the terminology used in video distribution begun to change.

The obvious culprit is the product itself. Esoteric, inaccessible, arty, but not art. Is that truth or myth? Says Fitzgerald, "It's a lie that the work is difficult to distribute. When I go out with my work, people don't know how to talk about it, but they know what they like. I'm making video rather than, let's say, painting, because I want to make work that a lot of people can experience. We've got the best communicative medium at our disposal—television." Perhaps the fault lies with proponents of video art culture itself, who tend to cloak video art in esoteric, inaccessible language, and who have consequently succeeded in stigmatizing video as the ultimate art wannabe.

As Fitzgerald notes, independent video embraces the highest order of communications technology yet generates woefully primitive communications. Video distributors sometimes promote tapes like films—or barely promote the work at all. The most effective of the art video distributors may be the Data Bank, which publishes a catalogue every two years and has mailed out color postcards for some releases. EAI and the Kitchen haven't provided new catalogues in years, relying instead on xeroxed price lists. Personnel at the social issue distributors interviewed for this article—Black Filmmakers Foundation, Intermedia Arts of Minnesota (formerly UCVideo), Women Make Movies (WMM), the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA), and Third World Newsreel (TWN, where, along with NAATA, I have working relationships)—have tried, with limited success, to extend the circulation of films in their collections by transferring them to tape formats and including these titles in catalogues, brochures, press releases, and postcard announcements grouped thematically with new releases. But, as TWN distribution head Ada Griffin points out, the mechanisms that feed film promotion do not exist for tapes. "Our initial strategy was to try to incorporate video into the context of film distribution, especially for the educational market," says Griffin. "It doesn't work because there aren't as many promotional vehicles for video. The only important one is television. In New York City, film is promoted through festival coverage, reviews for theatrical and semi-theatrical runs, or feature stories that crop up as a result. Video exists outside of the traditional promotional arena, and its own mechanisms for gaining notice are very limited."

As it stands now, video distribution is characterized by a small market—heavily subsidized and nowhere close to self-sufficient—and similarly small-scale marketing efforts. However, the bleak image portrayed here is only a snapshot of video distribution today. It is not a failure, but rather still in a formative stage. EAI, the grandparent of art video distribution, respected for its attention to the artists it represents, is barely 15 years old. A number of social issue film distributors have launched video collections in a serious way only in the past year. And that number is growing. After the publication of its *Video Tape Review* catalogue in 1986, the Data Bank's business quadrupled within a year. Since the arrival of the Kitchen's new distribution head, Robin O'Hara, the self-professed "only capitalist at the Kitchen," revenue has climbed from $30,00 in FY 1984-85 to $60,00 in FY 1985-86 and stands at $105,000 for the last fiscal year. Even with these numbers, however, it is easy to understand the frustration on the part of videomakers, because, in Downey's words, "Video art has matured, but distributors have not."

Video distribution operates within a skewed economy, often dependent on the institutions of the art world but not privy to the art market, where art objects are bought and sold as investments. Video distributors have done a commendable job of building a market out of nothing—a matrix of educational and cultural venues—all in a decade's time. But video distribution remains a welfare state. Follow the journey of a single dollar from the taxpayer to the National Endowment for the Arts or a select few arts councils, then granted to an exhibitor, who uses it to pay a distributor, who shares it with a producer for a tape made possible by the very same grantmakers. In this chain, there are few new dollars, particularly from the mass of taxpayers at the beginning.

Almost everyone agrees that video distribution needs a shot in the arm. Distributors say they need more money. Artists say distributors need more ideas—and perhaps to change their ways of thinking about and doing business. It is unlikely that the small handful of public funders can squeeze out any more financial support . Distributors will have to look for new sources of income, meaning new audiences. And, if distribution is to increase significantly, artists, too, will have to become more involved—

In the blink of an eye . . .

(amphibian dreams)

"If I could fly I would fly"





clockwise from top left:

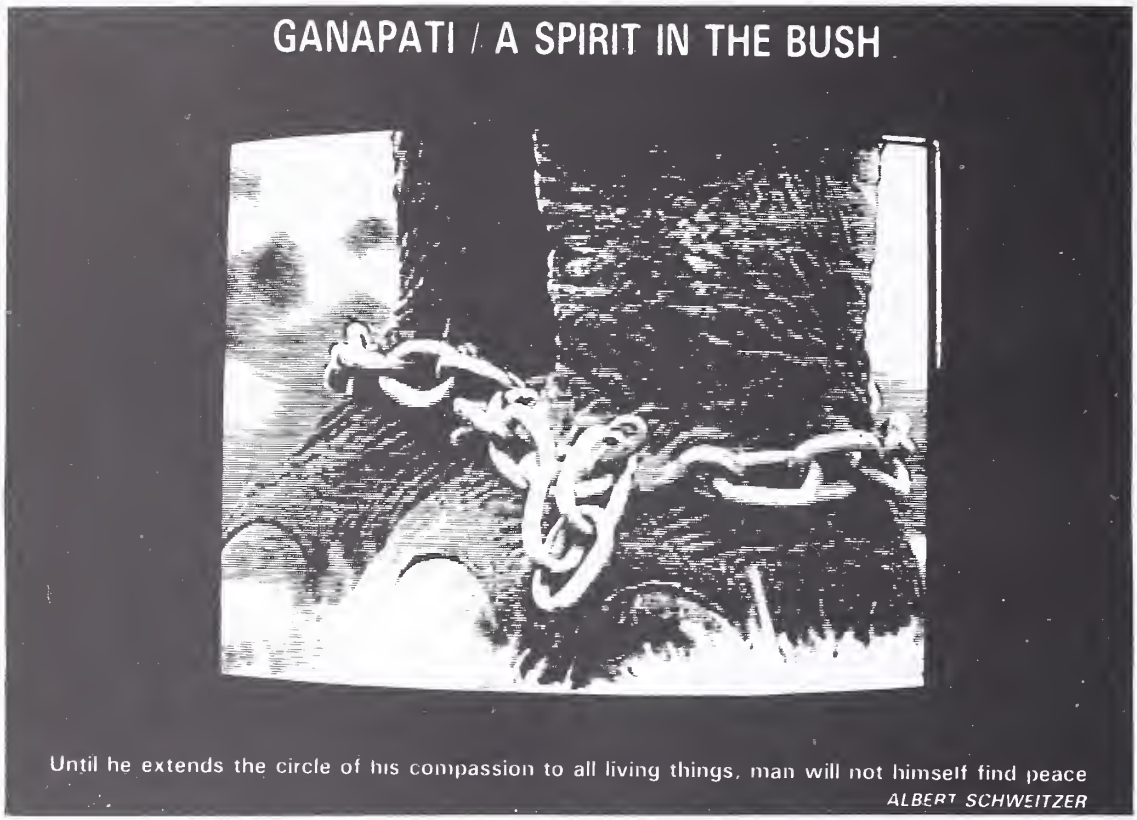
Mary Lucier distributed this postcard to publicize two television broadcasts of her new videotape.

A portrait of musicians Isidore "Tuts" Washington, Professor Longhair, and Allen Toussaint is used as the publicity logo for Stevenson Palfi's documentary.

From Juan Downey's documentary *J.S. Bach*, distributed by Electronics Arts Intermix.

Producers Ann Crenovich and Annie Goldson publicized their 30-minute video documentary *Las Mujeres del Mercado* with a postcard that includes a blank space for specific screenings and broadcasts.





Videomaker Dan Reeves publicized his new tape with a postcard mailed out in cooperation with distributor Electronic Arts Intermix.

either by demanding more of their distributors or by cooperating in new marketing strategies. Indeed, some of the most creative and successful distribution techniques have been developed by artists.

"Everything is negotiable," says Palfi. "I've always made my contracts negotiable. You have to know what you want and know what other people are getting by talking to other producers and reading up on distribution." Palfi, who works out of New Orleans, a "backwater" by the standards of the downtown New York video scene, is one of the most informed and savvy producers I interviewed. Like political videomakers affiliated with the Los Angeles-based Empowerment Project [see "The Video Trade: Part 1"], Palfi, who produces cultural documentaries, "packages" his distribution, using a number of distributors to cover various markets and handling the most lucrative home video and broadcast markets himself. "It's important to find out who does what best," he advises. Although the standard of nonexclusive contracts among video distributors results in a great deal of overlap, each distributor has carved out fairly distinct profiles in terms of the markets they represent and the orientations of their collections. The Data Bank, EAI, and the Kitchen appear to have multiple redundancies in terms of tapes in their collections but nevertheless have different strengths. The Data Bank focuses on the domestic market, accounting for 90 percent of their business. Says cofounder and director Lyn Blumenthal, "We've never been interested in cultivating the European market. Many of our tapes are also distributed by EAI, which does a good job internationally. We're more interested in new markets in the U.S." EAI earns 30 percent of its revenues from foreign sales and rentals.

According to O'Hara, the Kitchen consciously steers away from the educational/cultural closed-circuit venues served by EAI and Data Bank. "We've staked out a position in broadcast and home video," she says, adding that sales and rentals in those markets represented around $75,000 in revenues last year, including both foreign and U.S. broadcast. In contrast, the Data Bank does not target the broadcast market. "Broadcast sales are lucrative," says Blumenthal, "but they are lucrative for a select few artists. For example, I don't think there were more than 50 artists broadcast in Europe over the last few years. Data Bank is more interested in getting more money for more artists." Like the Kitchen, Data Bank is moving aggressively into the home video market [see "Video Trade: Part 1"]. Its much talked about *What Does She Want?* series, an anthology of women's films and tapes directed to professional women, generated a 20 percent positive response to the 20,000 brochures mailed to survey interest in the series. With a $59.95 retail price for each tape, the Data Bank has devised a point system to calculate royalties for the 40 artists whose work is in the series. Tapes five minutes long or less are valued at half a point; tapes over five minutes count for a full point, which, for example, is worth $8,000 when 1,000 copies of the full six-part series are sold. The three-part series of Kitchen tapes marketed by the California-based Pacific Arts company has earned gross revenues of $15,000 for each tape in a three-month period. Similarly, VHS rentals and sales account for 84 percent of the market for Cross Currents Media, NAATA's video distribution project, although this represents sales and rentals to schools, not individuals.

That statistic alone is enough to strike fear in the hearts of other distributors, who are moving much more cautiously into half-inch marketing. Film distributors are already worried about price undercutting by three-quarter-inch video, and video distributors who have relied on the three-quarter-inch cassette format as their standard see the threat of a potential flood of low-cost half-inch tapes. BFF, for one, only distributes video on three-quarter-inch. Some distributors, such as NAATA, offer the same prices for all videotapes regardless of format. But as the home video market becomes more entrenched, a $200 price for a VHS tape becomes difficult to justify. Videomaker Martha Rosler hopes the quality factor will discourage institutions from switching to half-inch and "that there will be a cachet associated with three-quarter-inch." She also considers the costs to replacing three-quarter-inch archives and the hardware needed to play European PAL and SECAM as possible roadblocks in the movement towards half-inch. Given the sheer growth of hardware in the half-inch institutional market, however, distributors will be hard-pressed to stop the inevitable descent of prices.

Some distributors argue that high promotional expenses makes negligible the difference in costs for handling 16mm and video and claim that the cost of home video marketing is extremely high, necessitating a careful, well-capitalized entry. But the track records of individual artists who have

Promotional materials used by Intermedia Arts of Minnesota includes a catalogue and production stills. At right is a still from Chris Spotted Eagle's *Our Sacred Land.*



HOW DO YOU PLEAD?

Greg Pratt and Jim Mulligan
1978; Color and B&W; 28:50

Preview $9 ►
Rental $45 ►
Purchase $100 ►

Two rural judges explain their opposing attitudes toward crime, punishment and restitution. Judge Dennis Challeen, more lenient and free-spirited, promotes his experimental program of letting offenders decide how to repay the community for their minor offenses. Judge Sigwel Wood, diametrically opposed to Challeen, proudly expounds his more traditional, strict approach to punishment. A thought provoking view of our court system.

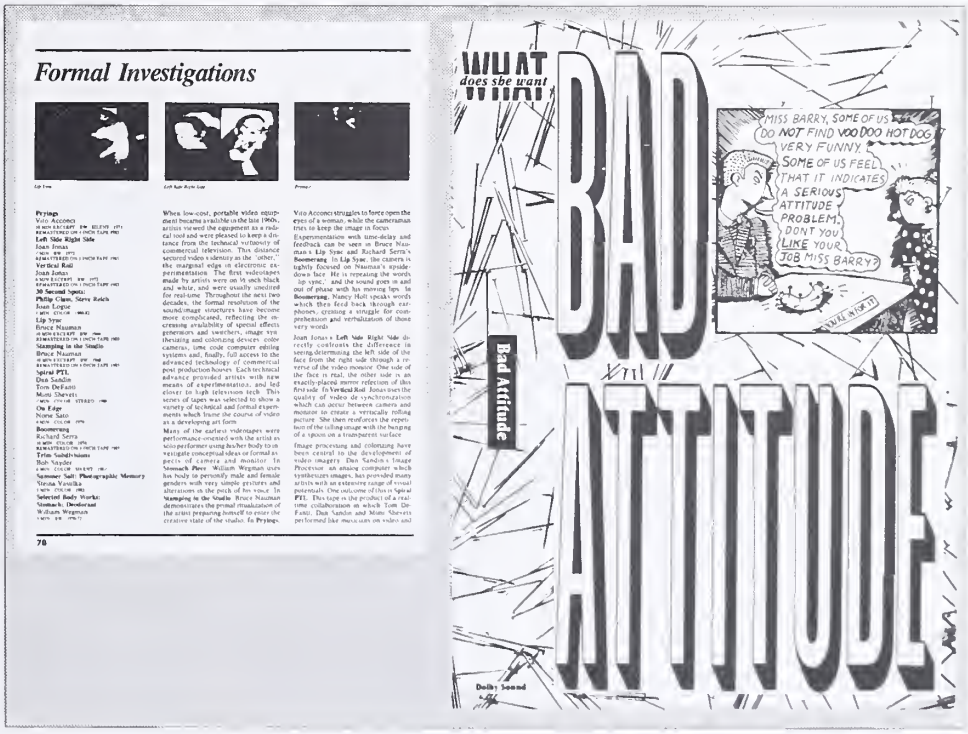
AWARDS

Norwest Broadcast News Association, Special Honorable Mention, 1977

In this special brochure from Third World Newsreel, Lionel Ngakane's video *Nelson Mandela* is promoted within the context of a thematic film collection. TWN also produces single-page flyers, such as this one for Richard Fung's *Orientations.*



Video Data Bank's 1986 catalogue *Video Tape Review* includes a section on programming suggestions, with packages of tapes that fall under similar themes or genres. The home video series*What Does She Want?* taps into cartoonist Linda Barry's talent and audience through its videocassette jacket cover-art.



distributed half-inch on their own may dispel those fears. The difference may be in the models. A commercial model for half-inch distribution—let's say Vestron's packaging, market research, and advertising blitz—is certain to be an expensive proposition. But an art video or documentary short needn't be a million-dollar seller in order to be successful. Tami Gold and Lynn Goldfarb zeroed in on a nursing constituency for their organizing tape *From Bedside to Bargaining Table* [see "The Revolution Will Be Televised," *The Independent*, June 1985] and sold 1,000 copies in two years, priced at $60 per tape. Stevenson Palfi sold 250 copies of his music documentary *Piano Players Rarely Ever Play Together* to Tower Records at $75 a shot, grossing over $18,000 for one bulk sale alone. All were offered at low cost but achieved revenues comparable to the annual performance records of distributors that carry hundreds of titles. No fancy packaging or huge ad budgets, but rather a well-calculated, well-directed marketing campaign.

This type of promotion could be difficult for distributors with large, amorphous collections. It is perhaps more practical for distributors with lists built around regional topics and producers like Minneapolis' Intermedia Arts, Whitesburg, Kentucky's Appalshop, the Portland, Oregon Media Project, or distributors serving specific interests, like BFF (which handles work on Afro American themes by black producers), WMM (women), TWN (third world and progressive media), NAATA (Asian American media), California Newsreel (progressive, labor, and southern African media), or Icarus (Latin American, Middle-Eastern, and African media).

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Video promotion is a wide open field. There is no single promotional strategy that can be cited as most effective. The field is too young, and at this point the most successful are the tapes that have even a semblance of a strategy behind them. Some of the best numbers I've seen are self-distribution efforts that are targeted, concentrated, and well-planned. In fact, if you take the performance records of a handful of artists—including Gold and Goldfarb's *Bedside*, Palfi's *Piano Players*, Ayoka Chenzira's *Secret Sounds Screaming*, and Barbara Trent's *Destination: Nicaragua*—they would probably rival the total revenues of any of the nonprofit distribution companies that handle video.* In this arena, self-distribution is only one option, and a variety of factors play into the equation for high numbers. The tapes mentioned above have clearly defined audiences: *Bedside* benefits from its direct link to health care organizing efforts. *Secret Sounds Screaming* deals with the sexual abuse of children, an issue prominent on the public agenda. *Piano Players*, a profile of Afro American musicians, is not geared to a particular constituency per se, but Palfi was able to market the video to the musicians' listening audience by distributing through a series of regional record labels active in various geographical territories, including Chicago's Alligator Records, the foremost blues distributor; Down Home Music in California; and Round Up Records in Boston, the mail order arm of Rounder Records. Palfi also capitalizes on tie-ins with the musicians profiled in the tape. He regards a blurb on the back of an album by Professor Longhair, who appears in the tape, as the most effective promotion for *Piano Players*.

Furthermore, these artists are business-minded and have been willing to put their time and resources into distribution. Chenzira does all her own promotion—from researching markets to designing artwork and sending out brochures in two bulk mailings each year. Her basic publicity tool is a two-color brochure for a single title, later incorporated into another brochure that advertises her entire video/filmography. Her brochures are inexpensive, designed on a Macintosh computer and reproduced on a laser printer. She also makes direct contacts with potential buyers, setting up tables at community cultural festivals to sell home video versions. "They're small nook and cranny places, but when you put it all together, it means a lot," says Chenzira. "Most distributors aren't good at narrowing down the markets. They might go to the women's market, which is broad, but they don't break it down to psychology departments, sociology, or music, looking at all the possibilities. I have the time and interest to do that."

Self-distribution is not for everyone—no strategy is. One measure that will accertain whether or not a distributor is right for you is the tangible materials they use to advertise the work in their collection. There are various promotional tools provided by distribution organizations: the distributor's catalogue; press releases for new acquisitions; postcards, flyers, or brochures for individual tapes; flyers and brochures for groups of tapes, organized by theme, aesthetic interests, or subject matter; press packets with synopses, bios, videographies, bibliographies, crew lists, cast lists, and production stills; trailers; festival entries; and advertisements in magazines and journals. The effectiveness of each method depends on the tape, the artist, and most importantly, the audience. Documentaries and narratives with more accessible stylistic approaches and wide public appeal may be well-served by extrapolating traditional film promotional tools such as press packets and brochures.

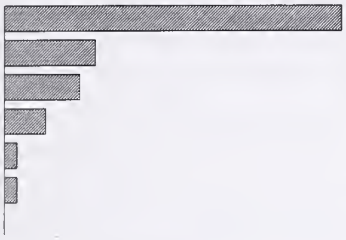
Most producers I spoke to were dissatisfied with the state of video promotion, particularly for video art, and the distributors readily admitted they wish they could do more. Their basic tool is the catalogue, or title list, which publicizes the collection as a whole. The most impressive is Data Bank's *Video Tape Review '86*, a 94-page booklet with essays on video art, descriptions of thematic programs as well as individual tapes, and background information about various collections handled by the Data Bank—from Castelli-Sonnabend to the C.A.T. Fund, Paper Tiger Television, Artists Television Network, and Out There Productions. EAI has been working on a similarly comprehensive catalogue, with essays, videographies, biographies, bibliographies, and 800 annotated title listings. It was due for publication this year, but the publication date has been delayed to 1988. EAI's experience is indicative of the tremendous amount of work a catalogue entails. "When we took on the catalogue, we didn't realize the breadth of the task," says Robert Beck of EAI. "What happens is you cover much more ground than you expected." EAI ended up archiving each tape with annotations that included release date, running time, mono/stereo sound, as well as remastering older works and shooting stills from many of the tapes.

For artists banking on inclusion in such collective promotions, timing is an important factor. EAI, the Kitchen, BFF, NAATA, and TWN all have new catalogues in the works—some of which have been in development for quite a long time. If an you can get in under the wire for inclusion in a catalogue, and if a catalogue listing is a beneficial marketing tool for your tape, *then* you're in business. Some distributors will promise a minimum of publicity on the distribution contract as policy. For example, BFF provides for a catalogue listing in their agreements with artists. Others do not, but, as Palfi attests, everything is negotiable. Artists should pay close attention to the distributor's promotional plans before they sign a contract, because there is a high probability that their tapes could collect more dust than revenues. When EAI took on the documentary *The West Bank: Whose Promised Land?*, producer Esti Marpet assumed, "If they picked it up they would do whatever necessary to distribute it." She never asked for specific publicity and has never gotten any. She estimates the tape brings in a few hundred dollars in royalties per year.

Both the Data Bank and EAI report impressive revenue increases as a result of the catalogue publications—EAI's last was a supplemental listing of 40 new acquisitions put out in 1985. But not everyone is convinced of the usefulness of catalogues as a marketing tool. According to Seiling, a catalogue is more helpful *after* a programming decision is made. "It gives insight into the intentions of the maker or can be used for publicity copy, but usually it comes out too late to promote new works." Previous to its recent publication, WMM has not published a catalogue since 1980 based on a conscious choice. "A catalogue is a function of distribution, not a promotional tool," says Debra Zimmerman, executive director of WMM. "The catalogue builds the collection because producers and funders like to see it,

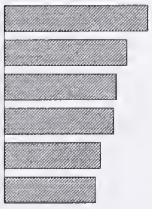
* New Day Films is a model for anyone interested in collective self-distribution. New Day's impressive performance especially deserves investigation by any social issue videomaker looking at distribution methods.

EAI billed $156,500 in 1986, in sales and rentals. Their domestic market, 70% of total billing, was divided among the following (approximations):



56%	educational institutions
15%	media art centers
12%	museums
7%	galleries
2%	festivals
2%	cable
0%	broadcast

EAI's overseas markets (Europe and Japan, 30% of total billing) was divided among the following (approximations):



23%	festivals
20%	broadcast
18%	media centers
17%	museums
11%	galleries
10%	educational institutions

The **Video Data Bank** billed $150,000 in 1986. Domestic sales and rentals, approximately 90% of total billing, were divided among the following:



50%	educational institutions
25%	museums
25%	galleries, alternative arts organizations, festivals

The remaining 10% of the Data Bank's total sales were in the European market; specifics were not available.

Statistics from Kathryn Hixson, "Video Art Distribution 1987," *Media Arts*, Spring 1987, and is reprinted here courtesy of the author and publisher.

Women Make Movies billed $96,000 in fiscal year 1986-87, both film and video sales and rentals. In the following chart, film sales and rentals are given for comparative purposes.



sales:	**video**	**film**	
	41%	27%	schools
	37%	36%	libraries
	20%	23%	community groups
	2%	5%	broadcast
	0%	9%	media arts centers



rentals:	**video**	**film**	
	53%	67%	schools
	2%	2%	libraries
	29%	13%	community groups
	2%	0%	cable
	4%	9%	media arts centers
	1%	2%	museums
	3%	6%	other institutions
	0%	1%	individuals

but the costs don't justify it for promotion alone. Librarians or institutions that use a lot of media may prefer it, but target mailings are the most effective way of reaching people."

Most distributors are only able to generate target mailings on a limited basis, much to the consternation of artists. "I still think it's a little bit scandalous that distributors don't do individual promotion for artists' work," says Martha Rosler. Target mailing campaigns are sporadic among the distributors, and often reserved for special programs that they believe justify the investment. For instance, EAI printed a special brochure for its package of television programs by Jean-Luc Godard and for *Spring/Fall: A Two Channel Music Videotape*, by Nam June Paik and Paul Garrin. Videomaker Shalom Gorewitz, who unsuccessfully requested a special mailing from EAI when he had several gallery shows at the same time, remarks, "I wish EAI could be more aggressive. At times they have pushed some artists. But I don't know how to get to be one of those artists." The distributors say they do not want to replicate another star system—creating stables of artists like art galleries—that only serves a select constellation of artists. But, to survive it makes good business sense to exploit more marketable tapes. Their task, then, is to find a way to make more of the work marketable.

Occasionally, largely resulting from an artist's initiative, a distributor will share the cost of special mailings or an artist will fill in the gaps with his or her own publicity. At the artist's request, EAI will pay for postage and provide a local mailing list, but the artist supplies the artwork, printing, and is responsible for the physical task of the mailing. When the Data Bank has done a special mailing, it pays for all costs and performs the work. According to O'Hara, the Kitchen may be able to kick in $50 or so if an artist wants a postcard produced and mailed in conjunction with an upcoming broadcast or exhibition.

With their lengthy lists of titles, the big three video art distributors would be hard-pressed to use strategies for specialized promotions that are more common among social issue media distributors, who frequently apply the same approach used in 16mm film distribution to video. A basic catalogue is supplemented by target mailings of flyers advertising single titles or thematic programs, along with press releases, postcards for special exhibitions or broadcasts, posters, and other print materials. WMM's Zimmerman directly correlates these additional marketing efforts with income. WMM's top seller, the videotape *Trade Secrets*, grossed $3,800 in a six-month period after a modest but highly targeted promotion to organizations and agencies related to women in blue collar work. For the film-on-tape *Master Smart Woman*, Jane Morrison's portrait of Sarah Orne Jewett, Zimmerman mailed only to teachers of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century English literature.

But even these distributors have faced difficulties when applying these techniques to stylistically nonconventional social issue tapes, what Griffin calls "progressive video art." Three of the 15 videos in TWN's collection can be described in these terms, and Griffin admits that response has been poor and that the organization's ordinary promotional strategy has not worked. "We're grappling with the issue: do we reject nonconventional video since we can't deal with it, or do we try to reach out to a different market? Are we here to serve the video art audience or an artist who happens to fit social concerns?" WMM has made headway in this kind of crossover market with the distribution of Doris Chase's *Concepts Series*. When *Concepts* was picked up in 1984, WMM mailed out almost 5,000 flyers, but found little interest. This year WMM used a list exchanged with EAI, and business for the series "has done incredibly well," according to Zimmerman. Clearly, distributors must still continue the work of exploring and building new markets begun by EAI 15 years ago.

In addition to devising workable, economic promotion techniques, distributors find they must also pressure artists to help fuel the distribution and publicity machine. Griffin observes, "Videomakers seem to be less aware than filmmakers about the needs of distributors or their audiences. There's always a problem with production stills, subtitles, masters, or even getting broadcast quality tapes. They want to reach everyone but don't always have a realistic view of what it takes to do that." Griffin identifies the same obstacles for artists that confront distributors: "The video universe just

DISTRIBUTOR'S/ARTIST'S SHARE OF FEES

	EAI	Data Bank	Kitchen	Intermedia Arts	BFF	TWN	WMM	NAATA
NONBROADCAST RENTAL	50/50	50/50	50/50	70/30	50/50	40/60-60/40	60/40	60/40
NONBROADCAST SALE	50/50	40/60	40/60	70/30	50/50	40/60-60/40	50/50	60/40
BROADCAST	40/60	20/80*	40/60	50/50-30/70	50/50	40/60-60/40	50/50-25/75	n/a

These figures are standard guides only.
* to be brought in line with standard broadcast royalities of 60%

isn't geared to support artists or marketing right now. Filmmaking is more institutionalized. And it's very hard to make a film without having to interact with other people. But I find that videomakers often work in isolation, so they have a harder time getting to know the ropes."

One problem is that the promotion45 of art video requires more contextualization and audience education than work that uses the familiar forms of documentary or narrative realism. In this, the role that video distributors sometimes play as curator-consultants has been crucial in building a market. Central to the operations of the major art video distributors are their massive tape archives—perhaps the most important repositories of video history in this country—and their public screening rooms. Programmers are able to use these facilities to screen tapes and consult staff on programming decisions. Chris Hill, video curator at Hallwalls in Buffalo, New York, makes regular trips to New York City to visit the Kitchen and to V-Tape in Toronto in order to screen tapes rather than simply program work on the basis of catalogue entries. For established curators like Hill or Seiling at Intermedia Arts in Minneapolis, these sessions may be a "critical exchange on aesthetics" with fellow curators, but for newcomers they may provide an introduction to video and a guide through the miles of material. But the amount of assistance offered may vary. For instance, assistant curator of film and video at the Whitney Museum of American Art Lucinda Furlong finds distributors always mindful of her interests—notifying her of new work, sending publicity materials, and so on. Curators from smaller programs, on the other hand, have received mixed results. Jordan Davis, coordinator of the first-time video exhibition program at the Cleveland-based Spaces, approached distributors to research tapes and get a sense of the field. He is still waiting for a title list from EAI after two requests and was led to understand that curating assistance was something the organization does not provide. Meanwhile, a number of artists I interviewed swear by the programming service EAI, the Data Bank, or the Kitchen provides and cite the results produced by staffpeople screening their tapes and notifying programmers. Undoubtably, curating is a subjective proposition, labor intensive and requiring selectiveness on the part of the distributor. There is an additional danger of investing distributors with the power of tastemakers—already implicit in the selection of tapes picked up in the first place. Recognizing this problem, EAI director Lori Zippay says they try to promote all their tapes equitably—even though a mere dozen or so comprise their profit-center. But with 130 artists to promote—the Kitchen represents 90 and the Data Bank a whopping 250—the kind of democracy this implies may not be possible to sustain.

The Data Bank's series strategy, devised for educators and programmers with limited budgets or experience, may be one answer to the dilemma. They have designed 15 packages based on various themes: "Minding Media" comprises eight tapes that critique the media industry, including Carlotta Schoolman and Richard Serra's 1973 *Television Delivers People* and Antonio Muntadas' 1982 *Media Ecology Ads*. Performances on tape by Laurie Anderson, John Cage, Spalding Gray, et al., are packaged as "Performing the Eighties," and six tapes constitute a series entitled "Classics." Essays in the catalogue describe each series' concept, accompanied by production stills. Although I find some of the titles—"Ritual (and Utterings and Chants)," "The Progressive Text," "Roles, Representations, Sexuality"—somewhat obscure, the program assistance offered by these groupings acts as useful introductions to video, contextualizing hard-to-distribute tapes in the company of work with similar thematic concerns.

The curatorial services provided by distributors underscores the importance of personal attention that is so critical in promoting a tape. Kit Fitzgerald, whose earnings from U.S. distributors is best described as dismal, has seen healthy earnings from *Adelic Penguins*, a new video made in collaboration with musicians Paul Garrin and Ryuichi Sakamoto. Sony provided production support and then advertised the tape in the Japanese retail market with an ad campaign; 2,000 copies of the tape were sold at $29.95.

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How much can artists expect from a distributor, given the very real difficulties posed by the current stage of (under)development in this area? Some artists simply feel grateful to have a distributor in the first place and hesitate to demand more than a shipping and collection agent. Videomaker Sherry Millner notes, "Artists are often unclear about how to deal with distributors because they are giving you access. It's unclear, for example, how much you should push or how much you should demand." In practice, an artist's leverage depends on how much the distributor values her or his work. But even established artists seem reticent about criticizing their distributors and agitating much on behalf of their own interests. Perhaps, as one observer of this scene remarks, a stigma of poverty is associated with art video and artists' expectations are accordingly low.

A further symptom of some artists' attitude towards distributors is evidenced in a common disinterest in the details of contracts. I talked to producers who couldn't remember whether they signed exclusive or nonexclusive contracts or couldn't recall the names of a single staffperson working for their distributor. Although artists persistently complain that distributors push the work only when *they* push the distributor, many neglect to keep track of the distributors' performance.

Royalties to artists guaranteed in contracts with distributors currently range between 40 and 60 percent for nonbroadcast sales and rentals, with broadcast revenues giving artists a higher share of 50 to 60 percent. Predictably, there are exceptions. Intermedia Arts takes 70 percent of the nonbroadcast fee, with 30 percent going to the artist, but pays for all costs, including prints, promotion, and festival entry fees. The Data Bank has paid 80 percent to artists for broadcast sales, but plans to come down to a standard 60 percent. An artist should expect a distributor to send quarterly accounts,

WHO PAYS FOR PROMOTION?

	EAI	Data Bank*	Kitchen	Intermedia Arts*	BFF	TWN*	WMM*	NAATA*
PRINTS	EAI	Data Bank	Kitchen	Intermedia Arts	artist	depends on royalty	artist †	NAATA
PROMOTION	split	Data Bank	artist ††	Intermedia Arts	BFF	TWN	WMM	NAATA

This data is highly subjective, based on the minimum promotion the distributor provides.
* have current catalogues available
† artist: first 10 dubs, then split
†† (with possible assistance from the Kitchen)

including a statement of gross income and royalties, a playlist, and hopefully, a check. This, however, is not the standard. All distributors have a stated policy on accounting, and some artists I interviewed were pleased with the professional accounts they received in a timely manner. But others complained about the irregularity and sparse information they often received. The schism I discovered between distributors' accounting policies and various artists' experiences suggests the wisdom of talking to other artists handled by a distributor before signing.

Royalties are only meaningful in relation to the expenses the distributor agrees to cover, particularly investments in promotion. It does little good if a distributor gives you a 70 percent cut, but you pay all costs and no one pushes the tape. You can end up with 70 percent of nothing. TWN, for example, negotiates a split between 40 and 60 percent based on several factors: anticipated cost of publicity, as well as who pays for dubs and the level of exclusivity the producer signs away. As a rule, an artist provides a distributor with an actual or access to a master and/or submaster on the original format, and the distributor pays for dubs. However BFF asks for eight dubs from the artist, and at WMM the artist pays for the first 10 dubs, then splits the cost on all subsequent prints.

When rights are shared by various distributors, artists can maintain a degree of control over how their tapes are handled by directing inquiries on a selective basis. Programmers often contact artists directly, especially in the case of retrospectives or screenings accompanied by personal appearances, and they will rent tapes from the artist or a distributor referred at the artist's discretion. For example, Gorewitz steers broadcasters to EAI because of their reputation for high-quality dubs and experience with broadcast sales and regards the Kitchen as his best distributor for foreign markets and festivals.

Prices for closed-circuit sales and rentals and broadcast are usually based on standard figures, with some input from the producer. According to Janis Young, distribution coordinator at EAI, artists working in one-inch are setting higher prices, in line with the cost of creating the work. On the other end of the spectrum, the pricing stategies employed by some political artists who are more concerned with dissemination than revenues has become a much-debated subject. For example, earlier this year Tami Gold and Lynn Goldfarb decided to discontinue their self-distribution of *From Bedside to Bargaining Table* and *Prescription for Change*, another documentary on nursing, and brought the two tapes to WMM. WMM, however, wanted to put a higher price tag on the work, to which the producers agreed reluctantly. *Bedside*'s price then rose from $60 to $100 for sales and $30 to $50 for rentals. In the six months between March and September 1987, *Bedside* generated only three sales and 17 rentals, while the newer *Prescription* saw only two sales and three rentals. Why this radical dip in sales? Price may be one factor, although WMM told Gold that respondants to the announcements at lower prices were willing to pay the higher price. Also, at that time, no special promotion was done, and WMM's revised, updated catalogue was in production. Gold is counting on the new catalogue, a display ad that will appear in the *American Nurse*, and a labor brochure that WMM plans to mail to revive interest in the work.

□ □ □

This discussion of contractual guidelines and caveats may be moot if no distributor will pick up your tape. New York Media Alliance executive director Robin White notes, "The possibility of self-distribution should address not only dissatisfaction with distributors, but what to do about tapes that aren't picked up." Seiling, who curated the "Premieres" section of this year's AFI National Video Festival, discovered a number of tapes that he considers high-quality and appropriate for distribution but had no takers. "I don't think the video art distributors are necessarily comprehensive," he says. "They are adequate for keeping abreast of people who have a certain cachet, but there aren't many new names. They seem to know about what's in the network, but not what's outside of it." This criticism is echoed by minority and regional artists, whose work has developed outside the downtown New York and West Coast video scenes. The Data Bank, a Chicago-based organization, has the best reputation of the main video art distributors for seeking and showing emerging artists. According to Griffin, TWN's decision to build a video collection is in part a response to the gaps in distribution for tapes by minority producers. And videomaker Gary Hill observes, "Video has become so insular, like a mini art world where a handful of curators can make or break artists."

Perhaps more commitment to interaction between artists and distributors is necessary to accelerate the maturity of video distribution. As discussed in my earlier article, a tacit understanding between both groups that "we're all in the same boat" persists. Actual progress, however, will require that camaraderie become translated into better communication among individuals, as well as improved dialogue in general. On the basis of the grumblings and rumblings, it seems that video distribution verges of a second stage of growth. The mainstay distributors, such as EAI, the Kitchen, and the Data Bank, have broken the ground and are now exploring new territory with half-inch distribution. More recently, social issue distributors have jumped into the fray, fostering markets for many types of video work. And playing a central role are individual videomakers who repeatedly devise new approaches for reaching their audiences.

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SELECTED GUIDE TO VIDEO DISTRIBUTORS

American Federation of Arts
41 E. 65th St., New York, NY 10021
(212) 988-7700
Sam McElfesh

Tours video packages of works, including the Whitney Biennial exhibitions. Artists are paid per-minute fees, with a minimum.

Black Filmmakers Foundation
80 Eighth Ave., #1704, New York, NY 10011
(212) 924-1198
Reginald Woolery

Veteran minority film distributor recently launched new video distribution collection by black independent producers that now includes 25 titles, 3/4" formats only. Standard rentals: $60, 30-min.; $100, 60-min.; $35, 10-min. and under; sales vary from $250 to $350. Resource guides are published periodically with new acquisition listings, and a catalogue is due out later in 1987.

Electronic Arts Intermix
10 Waverly Place, New York, NY 10003
(212) 473-6822
Lori Zippay

The brainchild of video pioneer patron Howard Wise, EAI has been distributing since 1973. Carries almost 800 titles by 130 artists, making it one of the most comprehensive video distributors. Carries video art, documentary, narratives. Standard rental prices: $50, 30-min. and under; $75, over 30-min.; sales: $200, 30-min. and under; $275, over 30-min. Title list available, catalogue in the works.

Facets Video
1517 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60614
(800) 281-9075
Milos Stehlik

Longtime independent film and video exhibitor now runs impressive mail order operation of around 2,400 titles. Primarily films on tape with small collection of video art. To rent, must be a member of Facets for $20/year; each rental $10; customer pays return shipping. Comprehensive catalogue available.

Intermedia Arts of Minnesota (formerly UCVideo)
425 Ontario St., S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55414
(612) 376-3333
Bob Gale (Mon./Tues./Wed. only)

Formerly distributor of UCVideo-produced works, in 1983 reorganized and picked up new works primarily by Minnesota videomakers. Moderate-sized collection of titles—which producer Randy Croce credits for ability to give special attention to single work. Good collection of Native American titles and package of dance and performance art tapes produced by KTCA-Minneapolis. Catalogue available.

The Kitchen Video Distribution
512 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011
(212) 255-5793
Robin O'Hara

Has distributed tapes since 1980, with a collection of approximately 250 titles by 90 artists selected by Kitchen curators. Noted for performance tapes as well as video art. Recently launched a home video series with California-based distributor Pacific Arts. Title list available; catalogue due out in 1988.

Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions
1804 Industrial St.
Los Angeles, CA 90021
(213) 624-5650
Nancy Barton

Tape collection generally parallels books in the store: feminist issues, avant-garde, theoretical work. All one-half-inch sales and rentals, mainly artists' videos, many of whom are by local artists, not necessarily exhibited at LACE.

The Media Project
Box 4093, Portland, OR 97208
(503) 223-5335
Melissa Stewart

Currently carries only one series of video-originated work, primarily films on tape due to nature of independent production in Northwest. Accepts works by regional producers only.

Museum of Modern Art
11 W. 53rd St., New York, NY 10019
(212) 708-9530
William Sloan

Circulating Video Library carries approximately 40 to 50 titles, some films on tape. Oriented towards single tapes, balanced between video art, animation, documentaries, and narratives. Rentals between $40 and $150; sales $200 to $725. Catalogue out of circulation, supplement with price list is available.

National Asian American Telecommunications Association
346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 552-9550 or (415) 863-0814
Paul Aihara

New collection of eight titles and one four-part series on the Asian American experience. Divided between videos and films on tape, all documentaries. Sales price averages $255 and 30-min. rental around $50. Detailed brochure/price list available.

New Video
276 Third Ave., New York, NY 10010
(212) 473-6000

"New Video Independent Series" sold wholesale to retail video stores by pioneer retailers, Steve Savage and partners. In Ric Robertson's article "Bringing Home the Wegman" in the Spring 1987 issue of *Media Arts*, Savage is quoted as saying only about two dozen of the 25,000 video stores around the country carry these kinds of tapes.

Pacific Arts Corporation
50 N. La Cienega Blvd., Suite 210, Beverly Hills, CA 90211
(213) 657-2233

Well-capitalized venture that plans to proceed seriously and aggressively into marketing video art for VCRs. Current collection is small and selective. Also published pilot video magazine, *Overview*, featuring clips.

Third World Newsreel
335 W. 38th St., 5th fl.
New York, NY 10018
(212) 947-9277
Ada Griffin

Longtime social-issue film distributor, last year established 15 video titles by minority producers. Rental prices: $40 to $50, 30-min. and under; $75 to $175, 60-min. and under; sales: $225 to $450. Newsprint catalogue available, twentieth anniversary program guide due later this year.

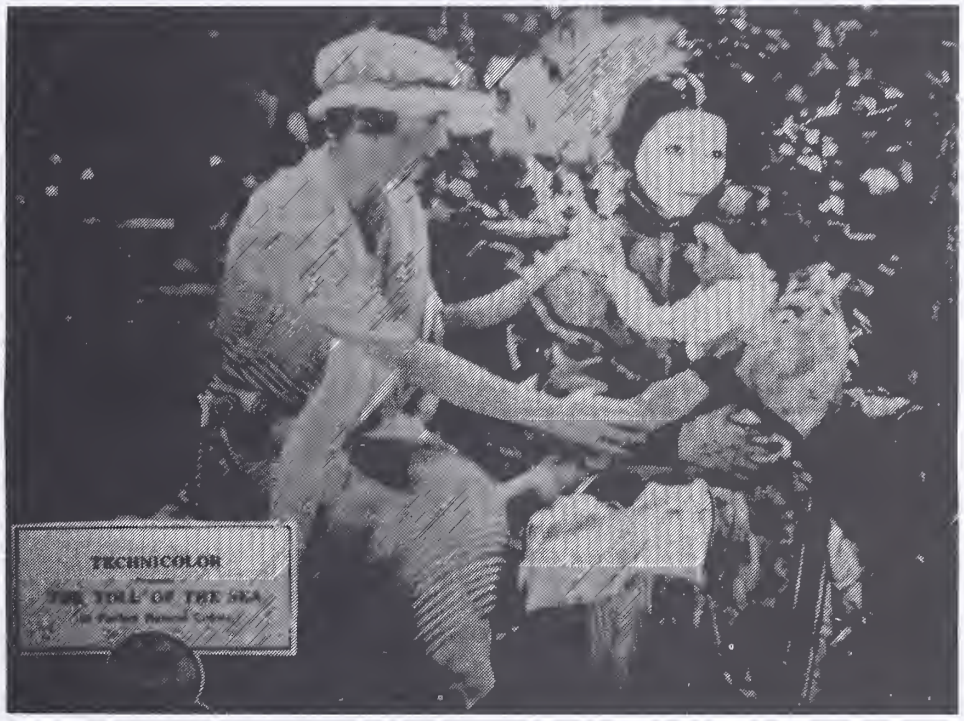
Video Data Bank
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Columbus Drive at Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60603
(312) 443-3793
Lynn Book

Major collection includes video art along with documentary and narratives, selections from Castelli-Sonnabend, the CAT Fund, Paper Tiger Television, the Artists Television Network, and Out There Productions, and series programs. Ambitious home video project *What Does She Want?* launched this year with target market of professional women buyers. Program rentals, $50-75; series rentals average $100 to $275; sales, $200 to $275. Comprehensive catalogue available.

Women Make Movies
225 Lafayette St., #212
New York, NY 10012
(212) 925-0606
Debra Zimmerman

Founded in 1972 and devoted to distribution of media by and about women. Collection includes video art titles as well as social-issue tapes. Program rentals: $50, 30-min.; $75, 60-min.; sales: $100 to $250. New catalogue published this year now available.

THE FIRST DECADE: THE ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



The 1987 Asian American Film Festival included a tribute to Anna May Wong, "the first popular Asian American film personality," seen here in the 1922 two-strip technicolor film *Toll of the Sea*.

Courtesy: Asian CineVision

Jeannie Park

As in years past, the opening of the 1987 Asian American International Film Festival was celebrated with a dim sum reception for 300 in New York City's Chinatown, not far from the Rosemary Theater that has become the festival's home. Hosted by Asian CineVision, the media arts group that organizes the annual festival, this gala proceeded much like those in previous years, with congratulatory messages from officials, pledges of support from sponsors, and introductions of the filmmakers. But there was one moment of surprise when a huge birthday cake appeared, decorated to commemorate a milestone in AAIFF history. While artists and organizers gathered around to blow out the candles, photographers jostled for position to capture the moment: AAIFF had turned 10.

For a decade, AAIFF has been the country's primary showcase for Asian American films, welcoming submissions of any production in which one of the principals—director or producer—is Asian. The guidelines place no limits on length, genre, or subject matter, which can be specifically Asian or not. By its second year, the festival had expanded to include foreign features from Asia, and, in 1981 it began touring the country after its New York engagement. Because the festival draws from a range of sources and seeks to exhibit works by emerging filmmakers as well as display the achievements of more established artists, the festival program can seem schizophrenic, juxtaposing, as it did this year, a program of Asian American shorts, including the self-reflective documentary *A Small Room in the Big House*, by UCSD student Roddy Bogawa, with the Indian feature *Raosaheb*, Vijaya Mehta's romantic tale of doomed struggle against restrictive social traditions in her country. Similarily, one could laugh one night at the absurdity of the Chinese bureaucracy satirized in Huang Jianxin's controversial *The Black Cannon Incident* and return the next day to the same hall to chuckle again, but this time to the accompaniment of Mar Elepano's snores in his animated dream short *Sleep Sounds*.

The celebration of the tenth AAIFF last June 12-16 extended the agenda even further, with retrospective programs featuring eight films from previous festivals intended to highlight the achievements of a decade of Asian American cinema. Among these were Academy award-nominated *Sewing Woman*, Arthur Dong's gentle portrait of his mother and the Chinese immigrant women of her generation, and Stephen Ning's *Freckled Rice*, which received substantial praise after premiering at the festival in 1983. In addition, the festival included a special program that paid tribute to two of the film industry's best-known Asian Americans: Anna May Wong and Ismail Merchant.

The main attraction of the opening night program was a screening of Wayne Wang's 1981 breakthrough film *Chan Is Missing*, first presented by the festival five years ago. Wang serves as the prime example of what the festival hopes to accomplish by nurturing young filmmakers, whatever form their filmic work might take. As a beginning director, Wang had been unable to exhibit his film *New Relationships* until AAIFF

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Sync Sound
TV-R/MasterColor
Technisphere Corporation

Post-production consultation
Available to ON-LINE clients
For applications contact
Media Alliance
c/o WNET, 356 West 58th Street
NYC, NY 10019 212/560-2919



Receiving its U.S. premiere at AAIFF was Keith Lock's *A Brighter Moon*, a half-hour narrative about two lonely students from Hong Kong living in Canada.

Courtesy: Asian CineVision

picked it up for the inaugural festival in 1978. Thus encouraged, he went on to direct a jumbled black and white film initially called *Fire over Water*, which many found difficult to comprehend but was accepted as part of the 1981 festival. He reworked *Fire over Water* by the time of the next year's festival and came up with *Chan Is Missing*, making Wang a hot talent and Asian American film a viable commercial enterprise.

Wang's progression from beginning filmmaker to AAIFF "graduate" outlined a course which has since been traveled by others but has also signaled a troublesome development for the festival itself. Indeed, while Asian American film has gone from obscurity to a state of recognition in which critics and film-going public alike anticipate upcoming releases by Asian American directors such as Wang, Christine Choy, and Steven Okazaki, the Asian American portion of AAIFF seems to be in decline—at least temporarily. Of the 15 different programs in this year's festival, only three were by Asian American filmmakers, and none of these were feature-length. ACV executive director Peter Chow admits, "To be honest, we really ran out of good programs." Ironically, the major factor causing the current dearth seems to be that Asian American films are finally being noticed and picked up by commercial distributors, who often have exclusive agreements with theaters and would rather premiere the films in more prestigious forums where they control publicity and press access. These sorts of obligations have precluded Wayne Wang's *Dim Sum* as well as Steven Okazaki's *Living on Tokyo Time* and Peter Wang's hit *A Great Wall* from appearing at the festival, although in the first two cases special screenings were arranged. "It's sort of a 'Catch-22' situation," laments festival director Marlina Gonzalez. "The filmmakers have become almost unreachable. I don't want to call it too much of a problem, though, because it's a big step forward for Asian American filmmaking. I'd like to see it as a positive result of the festival."

Although distributors may not always include the festival in their plans, filmmakers have voiced their strong support. A few wished the festival could pay more than travel expenses and was better organized to attract more mainstream publicity, but they asserted they don't enter AAIFF for material returns. Award-winning animator Arnie Wong, whose works have rounded out six festivals and whose masterful futuristic tale *Internal Transfer* was an eye-popping opener at this year's program of Asian American shorts, feels a responsibility toward fulfilling the festival's dual purpose: "to let the world know that Asians make films and to let the Asian community know that they can make films."

Other filmmakers echoed Wong's sentiments and noted that AAIFF offered a unique ethnic audience not likely to be found at other film events. Selection committee member Stephen Ning feels his involvement with AAIFF keeps him in touch with one of the most important segments of his audience. "There's really no other venue in terms of the audience you get," he says. For an experimental filmmaker like Ruby Yang, reaching other Asians through her films can be especially difficult: "My films are usually shown at festivals where only a few Asians show up," she comments. One of her first films, *Matrimony*, was "pretty off-beat," she says, but AAIFF hosted it, giving her morale a boost as well as giving her film exposure to an Asian audience. Yan's stark psychological chronicle of a stillbirth, *White Passage*, opened the festival this year.

For beginning Asian American filmmakers, finding any audience can be a challenge, and it is to them that AAIFF is perhaps most valuable. Peter Chow explains that AAIFF is "one of the only film festivals that doesn't mind showing beginner films or even good student films." Both of this year's new Asian American narratives were by first-time AAIFF exhibitors. According to selection committee coordinator Daryl Chin, a significant number of the Asian American narratives submitted were examples of what he amusedly calls the "Asian dating genre," in which the Asian protagonist's difficulties in adjusting to western culture are illustrated by relationships with members of the opposite sex. The committee picked only one of these: Keith Lock's *A Brighter Moon*, which tells a familiar story of two Hong Kong students struggling to cope in the west.

Lock's films and the other Asian American narrative, *Liru*, by Henry Chow, were both technically impressive. Arnie Wong points optimistically to this heightened proficiency and reminisces about the first festival, "I remember there were some films that were so-o-o bad."

After 10 years, AAIFF remains part student festival, part independent showcase, and part international exhibition, with the balance between these varying unpredictably from year to year. Because of its ethnic focus, the festival's general appeal is inevitably limited, so that it is still basically a community event, with the larger public mostly unaware of its existence. As such, it is hard to see how AAIFF can get around the obstacle of losing access to the best Asian American filmmakers once they sign with distributors. But if the festival can continue to propel enough Asian Americans toward this level of success, then it achieves an important goal.

Jeannie Park is a reporter/researcher for Time *magazine.*

Some of the strongest female musicians of the 1940s played in the multiracial jazz band the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. Greta Schiller and Andrea Weiss' documentary on the band was included in the Oberhausen International Festival of Short Films.

Courtesy filmmakers



IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

AFI Fest—Los Angeles, April, California. In the aftermath of Filmex, this noncompetitive, invitational fest debuted last yr under the aegis of American Film Institute, featuring work of over 25 US independent filmmakers, as well as new films from 37 countries. The lineup last yr featured 100 programs, seminars & additional ind. film & video programs. Last yr's fare incl. Scandinavian Film Day, American Film Market Day, Asian Film Day, French Film Day, Latin American Film Day, Documentary Day, Independents Day, Women in Film Day & salutes to Berlin, Swiss-based production & Soviet cinema. Also included was special program designed for children, attended by over 5,000. Free shows featured range of works by US independents. Fest pays return shipping for selected films; no entry fees. Send preview tapes prior to applying & entry forms will be sent for selected films. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact: Ken Wlaschin, director, AFI Fest-Los Angeles, Box 1739, Hollywood, CA 90078, or American Film Institute, Manor House, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7707.

Cleveland International Film Festival, April 7-24, Ohio. Showcases eclectic mix of features, docs & shorts, incl. a featured 4-day Independent Film Series, highlighting works by new, young & student ind. filmmakers, several of whom attended as guests. Last yr over 100 films from 21 countries presented at 4 theaters; sidebar series at Cleveland Cinematheque focused on contemporary Soviet cinema. No entry fees. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2" for preview by selection committee. Deadline: Dec. 31. For information & entry forms, contact: David W. Wittkowsky, managing director, Cleveland Internat'l Film Festival, 6200 SOM Center Road C20, Cleveland, OH 44139; tel: (216) 349-0270, telex 980131.

National Educational Film & Video Festival, April 29-May 1, California. 18th edition of fest, generally recognized as 2nd largest nat'l competition for short & doc works & as largest such event on West Coast, will be held in various locations in Oakland, San Francisco & Berkeley. Entries judged in over 75 educational cats, incl. business, career & vocational guidance, fine arts, how-tos, health & safety, language arts, media studies, travel & sports, history, human relations & social studies. Last yr over 715 entries from throughout the world submitted. Judging, which incorporates a process of initial rating by intended audience, is done by subject matter specialists, educators, students, media professionals & media purchasers on basis of "content, technical quality/craftsmanship & creativity of treatment." Awards incl. Crystal, Gold, Silver & Bronze Apple Awards & honorable mention certificates in each cat.; separate competition for student films & videos offers cash prizes. Special awards incl. Best of Festival, Best Entry from Northern California, Best Filmstrip & Chairman's Award. Top Crystal winners now eligible for entry in 61st Academy Documentary, Feature & Short Subject competition. Fest catalog lists all entries & is sent to 5,000 media purchasers. Last yr a one-day producer's marketplace for independents seeking distributors was inaugurated, free to films participating in fest or $50 for unentered productions. Entries must have been released after Jan. '86 & be available for nontheatrical distribution. Formats: 16mm, 1/2", filmstrips. Fees: films & videos $65-130, depending on length; filmstrips $35; student $10-35. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact: Sue Davies, Nat'l Educational Film & Video Festival, 314 E. 10th St., Oakland, CA 94606; (415) 465-6885/6878/6891.

Santa Fe Film Expo, March, New Mexico. Showcase for recent ind. films of any subject, length, style & genre, including doc., drama, animation, film art & "that which defies categorization." Films televised nationally or in New Mexico ineligible. Held for 4 weekends in March. All entrants paid rental fee. Format: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2" for preview. Entry fee: $10. Deadline: Nov. 23. Contact: Linda Klosky, Center for Contemporary Arts of Santa Fe, Box 148, Santa Fe, NM 87504; (504) 982-1338.

FOREIGN

Belgrade International Film Festival, Jan. 29-Feb. 6, Yugoslavia. An annual, noncompetitive invitational "wrap-up of world cinema," this feature film fest is now in its 18th yr. Consists of films awarded at festivals & critically recognized films & draws sell-out crowds of almost a quarter million, w/ several internat'l participants & exceptionally large young audience. Last yr several controversial films presented & fest brought in directors from several countries. Programming may be arranged thematically, in programs that incl. newest trends in contemporary artistic world, nat'l cinematographies & children's films. Films presented in original version w/ Serbo-Croatian subtitles (LUMI system) & occasionally w/ simultaneous translation. Held in Sava Center, a large congress complex on the Danube. Fest may be moved in '88, so that there will be 2 editions held during the yr. Recognized by Internat'l Federation of Film Producers' Associations (IFFPA). No entry fee. Format: 35mm. Fest will pay for shipment of films they wish to preview, on cassette, otherwise entrant pays shipping. Accomodation provided for invited guests. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact: Radivoj Cveticanin, chair of festival's Council, Belgrade Internat'l Film Festival, Sava Center, Milentija Popovica 9, 11070 Belgrade, Yugoslavia; tel: 438-086; telex: 11811.

Fantasporto International Festival of Fantasy Films. Feb. 12-21, Portugal. *Variety* has labeled this the fastest growing fest in Portugal. Now in 8th yr, it screens "imaginary films...in which the creative powers of the imagination have a treatment of quality," imaginary films being those that convey irreality. Competitive, info & retrospective sections accept short & feature-length 35mm films completed since '85; must be in English, French, Portuguese, or subtitled. Entry appls should be accompanied by film synopsis, press photos, posters & cast list. Films in competition must be Portuguese premiere. Internat'l jury awards non-cash prizes for best film, best direction, best actor & actress, best screenplay, best special effects & best short. About 100 films screened yearly & all participating films receive certificate. Fest founded by editors of film magazine

Cinema Novo & sponsored by Portuguese gov't; held in northern industrial city of Porto. Preselection for competition done by committee appointed by organizers. Deadline: Nov. 30. Contact: Mario Dorminsky, director, Fantasporto Internat'l Festival of Fantasy Films, Rua Diogo Brandao, 4000 Porto, Portugal; tel: 32 07 59.

FILMS DES FEMMES INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF CRETEIL, Mar. 11-20, France. 10th anniversary celebration of world's 1st women's film fest & one of the premiere showcases for new films directed by women. Last year's fest attracted capacity audiences of 25,000 to this Paris suburb, incl. 300 journalists, several distributors & buyers, festival reps & about 60 filmmakers attending w/ work. Over 130 films screened on 7 screens. Fest has concurrent market. Program incl. competition sections for feature fiction, feature doc. & short fiction & nonfiction films, as well as info sections encompassing homages, tributes, retrospectives & sidebars of awarded films from other European fests. Cash & equipment prizes awarded; a 10,000FF *prix de publique* in each cat. & 2 jury prizes of 5,000FF to feature films. Each filmmaker given press conference at which not only their film but also the greater thematic, critical & philosophical issues surrounding films by women are discussed & at times extended discussions following screenings go up to 2 hours; also other regularly scheduled debates. This year a pre-selection will again be made at FIVF by fest's U.S. rep, who will accept 16mm, 3/4" (strongly preferred) & 1/2" for preview. Fest format: 35mm & 16mm. Films must be directed or codirected by women, completed since June 1, '86 & not theatrically released in France, broadcast on French TV, or shown at other French film festivals. Student productions not accepted. All subjects, genres & styles considered. Fest will pay for accommodations (3 days) for participating filmmakers, as well as round trip shipping for films selected through FIVF. Films should have English translation, synopsis & publicity & biographical materials. Entry fee: $15 per submission (payable to FIVF). Deadline: Nov. 25. For info & applications, contact: Kathryn Bowser, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400.

ISTANBUL INTERNATIONAL FILM DAYS, April, Turkey. 7th edition of feature fest organized by Istanbul Foundation for Culture & Arts, incl. int'l. competition for features on artists' life stories & artistic creativity in different fields; noncompetitive section for features, docs & shorts on fest's theme; info sections incl. works from world festivals, adaptations from literature to cinema, tributes & Turkish panorama & invitational int'l feature competition for 35mm films completed after Jan. '86 (Turkish premiere). Grand Prix (Golden Tulip Award) & 2 special jury prizes awarded by jury directors, producers, critics & actors. Directors of films admitted to competition are guests of fest for 5 days. Certificate of participation given to all films in all sections. 140,000 attended in '86. Deadline: Jan. 1. Contact: Hulya Ucansu, director, Internat'l Istanbul Film Days, Yildiz Kultur ve Sanat Merkezi, 80700, Besiktas-Istanbul, Turkey; tel: 160 45 33, telex 26687 iksv-tr.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS & VIDEOS BY WOMEN. May 27-June 3, Canada. Organized by nonprofit Cinema Femmes Montréal in collaboration w/ Cinemama, a group that organizes panel discussions, workshops & promotes films & videos directed by women, this fest's objectives are to discover original women's works & encourage dialogues w/ film & videomakers. This is fest's 4th yr. 3 public prizes, voted upon by audiences, offered in feature, video & short film sections. Feature film section accepts Montreal premieres of fiction, doc & experimental films completed in the last 2 yrs, in 35mm or 16mm, over 52 mins. Cash prize in this section $2,000. Noncompetitive section features selections of "little known but remarkable films," feature films of various genres & a retrospective. Video competition accepts 3/4" fiction, doc, or video works which are Montreal premieres produced in last 2 yrs. Cash prize: $500. Noncompetitive video section arranged thematically. Fest particularly interested in incl. large number of videos. Award also made for a short film. All work must be directed by women & should be subtitled in French. FIVF will host director Carolyn Rafman-Lisser in late Jan. as she makes a preselection of new works. Submissions should be made to FIVF before that date. Format: 16mm, 3/4"; 1/2" for preview. For info & appl., send SASE to Kathryn Bowser, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400. Entry fee: $15 (payable to FIVF). Fest deadline: Jan. 15. Fest deadline: March 1. Entry fee: $25 CDN (features), $15 CDN (videos, shorts under 52 mins). Fest address: Festival Internat'l de Films et Videos de Femmes de Montreal, 3575 Boul. St. Laurent, Ste. 615, Montréal, Québec, Canada H2X 2T7; tel: (514) 845-0243, telex 05-826852.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS & VIDEOS ON ART, March 8-13, Canada. Intended to develop public's understanding & appreciation of art, this fest, now in 7th yr, seeks to promote production of films & videos on painting, sculpture, architecture, design,

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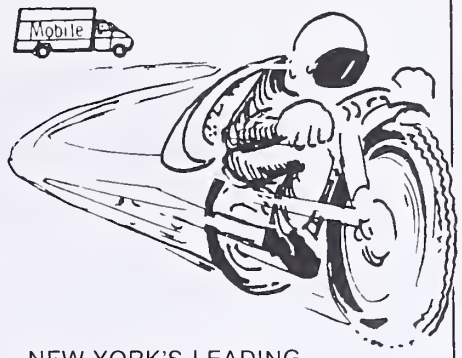
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crafts, museology, cinema (personalities & techniques), photography, literature, dance & music. 5 sections comprise the program: "Creative Crossroads" presents films & videos produced since '85; "Focus" stresses theme (style, period, or trend), tribute (to a noted artist or filmmaker whose work has contributed to advancement of films on art) & event (highlighting anniversary or exhibition); "Reflections" presents films & videos produced by artists; "Artificial Paradise" explores film/video design, emphasizing talents of film/video technicians, actors & directors in set design, costumes, special effects, cinematography, editing, or music & "Time Remembered" features retros of films/videos on art now part of cinema history. An internat'l jury awards winning films in the "Creative Crossroads" section w/ Grand Prize & prizes for Best Director, Best Film for TV, Best Biography, Best Essay & Aid to Creative Achievement. Separate Grand Prize for Video. Feature length & shorts accepted. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2" (final selection based on original format); cassettes for preview. No entry fees. Fest pays insurance while in Canada, return shipping & costs of customs clearance in Canada. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact: Rene Rozon, director, Montreal Internat'l Festival Of Films & Videos on Art, 445, rue St. Francois-Xavier, Bureau 26, Montréal H2Y 2T1, Canada; tel: (514) 845-5233.

Oberhausen International Festival of Short Films, May, W. Germany. 34th yr of important int'l competitive event for all types of short films & docs that are unique & unconventional in form, content & approach. Particularly seeks to showcase social docs, new developments in animation, debut films, experimental & short features, work highlighting new filmmaking trends & new films from developing nations, all under fest theme: "Way to the Neighbor." Several int'l & local juries confer cash awards: a Grand Prix of DM5000, Main Prizes of DM2000 & several local & state gov't, critics, youth & organizational jury prizes, ranging from DM1000-3000. 2 US ind. entries won prizes last yr. Competition complemented by info & retro sections. US selection of entries for next yr's edition will take place at FIVF in early Jan. Heide Schlupmann, who last yr screened over 90 films in NY, will be looking for narrative, doc, animated & experimental films up to 35 mins (docs in certain cases may be up to 60 mins). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S 8 in exceptional cases. Films must be German premieres, completed after Jan. 1, '87. Organizers interested in soliciting work from wide geographic area, particularly West Coast & Midwest & from well-established & emerging filmmakers. Prescreening on 16mm (preferred), 3/4" & 1/2". Entry fee: $15. Group shipment of selected films will be sent from FIVF to Germany. For info & appl., send SASE to: Oberhausen Selection, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400. Deadline: Dec. 15. Deadline for submissions in Germany: March 10. Fest address: Westdeutsche Kurzfilmtage, Grillostrasse 34, D-4200 Oberhausen 1, W. Germany; tel: (0208) 8252652; telex 856414 KUOBD.

CORRECTION: The Great Lakes Film & Video Festival in Wisconsin was inadvertantly listed as occurring in November in the Aug./Sept. issue of *The Independent*. The festival will take place in the spring. For further information on exact dates & entry requirements, contact: Patricia Tully, managing director, Great Lakes Film & Video Festival, UWM Dept. of Film, Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201; (414) 229-3906.

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DRAMA AND REALITY



***The Blood of the Condor*, by Jorge Sanjinés, is discussed in a chapter on revolutionary cinema and the Bolivian experience in *Cinema and Social Change*.**

Courtesy Jump Cut

Cinema and Social Change in Latin America: Conversations with Filmmakers
edited by Julianne Burton
Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986, 302 pp., $22.50 (cloth), $10.95 (paper)

Robert Stam

The last few years have seen a veritable explosion of book-length studies of Latin American Cinema: one thinks of Carlos Mora's *Mexican Cinema* (University of California Press), Michael Chanan's *Twenty-Five Years of the New Latin American Cinema* (British Film Institute) and *The Cuban Image* (BFI/Indiana University Press), Randal Johnson's *Cinema Novo x Five* (University of Texas Press) and *The Film Industry in Brazil* (University of Pittsburgh Press), Gaizka de Usabel's *The High Noon of Latin American Films in Latin America* (UMI Research Press), and Randal Johnson and my *Brazilian Cinema* (Associated University Press). Julianne Burton's *Cinema and Social Change in Latin America* is the latest addition to this field. Consisting of 20 interviews with key directors, actors, critics, and media activists from Latin America, the book indirectly offers a historical overview of three decades of socially-conscious filmmaking as practiced in a wide diversity of countries.

The opening essay orients the reader by providing a succinct survey of the evolving conditions of Latin American filmmaking. Cinema in Latin America, Burton argues, is a "politicized zone," deeply immersed in historical process. The New Latin American Cinema forms an integral part of a post-war era of increasing militancy and nationalism. This introduction sketches the broad features of this cinema: its passionate rejection of the compartmentalized, hierarchical Hollywood production system, the search for a new kind of interaction between film and audience, the theorization of an alternative anti-colonial thematic and aesthetic. She also outlines the changing political circumstances which conditioned production: the general democratization of the immediate post-war period, the tendency toward coup d'etats and repression beginning in the sixties and culminating in the seventies, giving way, finally, to a redemocratization in the eighties which breathed new life into film culture, especially in Argentina.

Cinema and Social Change in Latin America is divided into three sections: "The Documentary Impulse: The Drama of Reality," "Fictional Filmmaking: The Reality of Drama," and "Behind the Scenes." The first two sections classify the filmmakers interviewed according to whether their work has been primarily fictional or documentary, but as the subtitles—the "drama of reality" and the "reality of drama"—suggest, one of the most provocative contributions of New Latin American Cinema has been precisely the fusion of these two modes. New Latin American Cinema has also demonstrated an exuberant diversity of styles, ranging from the grittiest kind of documentary realism to the most fantastic allegory and "quotidian surrealism," the common denominator being a rejection of "entertainment as usual." The interviews feature proponents of a wide spectrum of approaches, from relatively "straight" documentaries (Fernando Birri, Helena Solberg-Ladd), through mixed documentary-fiction modes (Nelson Pereira dos Santos), to tropical allegory (Glauber Rocha), and absurdist reflexivity (Raúl Ruiz).

The third section supplements the comments by filmmakers with details of work "behind the scenes," i.e., the labors of film-related professionals such as actors, distributors, publicists, critics. In this sense the book transcends auteurism—an approach that would have been preoccupied only with adding a few third world cineastes to a preexisting first world "pantheon"—by putting the centrality of the author-director in context and establishing the relationship of the director to other film workers. In this section we observe Latin American Cinema from the perspective of the actor (Nelson Villagra), the politically-aware distributor (Walter Achugar), the filmmaker-theorist-bureaucrat (Julio García Espinosa), the historian-teacher-activist (Alfonso Gumucio Dagrón), and the television critic (Enrique Colina). Nelson Villagra explains the theory of acting—a

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synthesis of Stanislavski and Brecht—that undergirds his performances in such films as *The Jackal of Nahueltoro* and *The Last Supper* and expands on his opposition to what he considers the overly rhetorical and declamatory style employed in many Latin American films. Uruguayan Walter Achugar speaks of his role in promoting Latin American cultural collaboration as head of the Third World Cinemateque. Enrique Colina details his efforts as TV film critic on a show called *24 Times/Second*—a kind of radical Cuban version of *At the Movies*—where he tries to provide Cuban audiences with the tools for "decoding" the popular entertainment films currently being screened.

Julio García Espinosa, a founding member of ICAIC (the Cuban Film Institute), cultural activist, and government official relates his provocative experiments in popular culture, most notably his attempt to revitalize and "dialecticize" the Cuban cabaret tradition degraded by commercialism and the Mafia. These popular forms, Espinosa argues, have utopian potential. People don't really want to be cooped up watching television: "They have an organic need to go out, to participate, to communicate with one another not through packaged images but through live activities." (Anyone who has been to Cuba knows just how good Cubans are at the "live activities.") Espinosa speaks as well of the profound musical culture of the Cuban people and of his attempts to subvert the compartmentalization of tastes and genres. (One such experiment, a program entitled "Concert in B Major," grouped composers such as Bach, the Beatles, Benny Moré, and Leo Brouwer solely on the basis of the initial letters of their names.) Given the centrality of music in Cuban culture, Espinosa argues, every Cuban filmmaker should be required to do at least one musical, just as every Hollywood hack was required to do the obligatory western.

Alfonso Gumucio Dagrón, finally, speaks of the travails of an itinerant media activist from Bolivia. Dagrón managed to reconstruct the buried history of Bolivian cinema by searching, without the help of index cards or microfilm, through all the newspapers published in Bolivia since the turn of the century. Given the absence of photocopying machines, Dagrón had to photograph all the items, one by one, to create what he calls a "monstrous archive." Burton's interview with Dagrón provides a glimpse not only of the tremendous obstacles confronting a Latin American media-activist, but also of the crucial need for such work, insofar as films in Latin America, as everywhere, are dependent on a kind of discursive ecology, a support-system furnished by history, criticism, and cultural promotion.

Cinema and Social Change is worth reading for the anecdotes alone. Fernando Birri describes working in flooded areas of Argentina, with heavy equipment sinking the filmmakers in mud up to their knees. Jorge Sanjinés speaks of the subtle problems involved in winning the confidence of Quechua Indians who had every reason to be suspicious of the white "gringos" from the cities. (The situation was eased when the filmmakers submitted to the authority of a "yatiri" who read the coca leaves to discern the quality of their intentions.) Patricio Guzmán tells of the brutal repression unleashed in Chile by Pinochet, resulting in the presumed death of two of his collaborators on *Battle of Chile*. We virtually hear the gunfire as we accompany the Sandinista guerrillas on their Naranjo offensive along with filmmakers Emilio Rodríguez Vázquez and Carlos Vicente Ibarra. Raúl Ruiz explains how three of the major films of the Allende period were made at the same time and with the same camera. (Ruiz would finish work on *Tres Tristes Tigres* in the morning, Aldo Francia would pick up the camera to make *Valparaíso Mi Amor*, after which Miguel Littín would pick it up for *The Jackal of Nahueltoro*.) But their anecdotes are not usually whimsical or self-serving. Rather, they make a point or underscore a theme: the unfavorable circumstances of third world filmmaking, the realities of political repression and exile, the dangers of paternalism, the need to collaborate with the "people" whom one claims to serve.

Another leitmotif that emerges from the interviews is the theme of cultural difference within unity—i.e., each Latin American country has a specific cultural personality, yet feels itself to participate in a larger collectivity of "Latin Americanness." Mario Handler speaks of the Uruguayan tendency to "hypercultivation" in the arts. Sanjinés emphasizes the strong amerindian strain in Bolivian culture. Espinosa stresses the central role of dance, of conga and rumba, in Cuban life, while Pereira lauds the contribution of Afro-Brazilian religion to Brazil's cultural mix. Yet all these diversely formed peoples identify with the larger Latin American entity. As Ruiz puts it, "The Latin American experience is of being outside (or inside) European culture *in general*, whereas the European is within one specific culture or another." The interviews also highlight the cultural differences (and parallels) between Latin America and the United States. Tomás Gutiérrez Alea mocks the inability of critics such as Andrew Sarris to understand revolutionary films like *Memories of Underdevelopment*, given the visceral anticommunism and the tendency to identify completely with alienated intellectual "heroes" on the part of these critics. Helena Solberg-Ladd argues that Latin Americans are more accustomed to metaphorical language which allows for "more permeable boundaries between the imaginary and the real." The Latin American documentarian working in the United States, she complains, must always "start from scratch," without assuming "any knowledge on the part of the viewer." Still, she appreciates the opportunity of being a cultural mediator, able to present an "insider's view" to North American audiences.

Burton has been ambitious in attempting to survey three decades of Latin American filmmaking theory and practice, including that in most of the major filmmaking countries, but privileging Cuba and Brazil at the expense of Mexico and Argentina. (One laments, for instance, the absence of certain key figures such as Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, the seminal theorists of "third cinema.") Within diversity, however, Burton has managed to maintain an overall unity based on thematic continuities: the multi-fronted struggle against colonialism, the search for an alternative aesthetic, the attempt to transform the modes of production, distribution and exhibition.

The personal histories of the interviewees also reveal certain commonalities of experience. Most of the filmmakers were middle-class people who only gradually identified with the oppressed classes and national struggle. Most travelled to Europe only to discover themselves, paradoxically, as Latin Americans. Most experienced political repression. What is striking, in the main, is their political coherence and dedication, as well as their intellectual sophistication. (How many Hollywood directors, one wonders, would sprinkle their conversation with references to Hegel, Brecht, Gramsci?)

A reading of *Cinema and Social Change in Latin America* ends with a feeling of gratitude, both to the editor of the volume and to the figures interviewed. In a field which too often resorts to recycling the same clichés, this book constitutes a substantial and welcome contribution.

Robert Stam teaches in the Cinema Studies Department at New York University. He is the coauthor of Brazilian Cinema *and author of* Reflexivity in Film and Literature.

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SCRIPTS/RESUMES expertly typeset with wide range of typefaces & font sizes available. Best rates. Please call (212) 397-1909 or write: P & R Enterprises, Box 20490, Dag Hammarskjold Convenience Center, NY, NY 10017.

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BOB BRODSKY & TONI TREADWAY: Super 8 & 8mm film-to-video mastering with scene-by-scene color correction to 3/4", 1" & Betacam. By appointment only. Call (617) 666-3372.

TAMERIK PRODUCTIONS off-line VHS editing room for rent. State-of-the-art Panasonic 8500 decks, controller, monitors, 3/4" playback. Cost effective way to edit VHS originals, Betacam, or 3/4" transfers. $75/day. Special rates for long projects. Near PATH train in Jersey City. Call Tami Gold (201) 798-1785.

SOUND TRANSFERS: 16/35mm, all speeds and formats, including multi-track and time code. Full FX Library. Evening and weekend service available, convenient downtown location. Low rates. Downtown Transfer (212) 255-8698.

16MM FLATBEDS: 6-plate flatbeds for rent in your workspace or fully equipped downtown editing room with 24 hr access. Cheapest rates in NYC for independent filmmakers. Call Philmaster Productions (212) 873-4470.

SONY'S SP is breakthrough in 3/4" editing. Offers 1st generation quality on 3rd generation. HDTV Enterprises, Inc. has intro. offer: $35/hr, SP editing w/ Convergence; $55/hr w/ operator. Options: A/B roll, slo-mo, compressions & other digital FX, high-res CG. Call Hank Dolmatch, HDTV (212) 874-4524.

BROADCAST QUALITY video editing room. Downtown, 24 hr access. 3/4" off-line system complete w/ Sony BVU-800 decks, and Sony BVE-800 controller. $27/hr, $1200/wk, lower for long term. Also, option to rent furnished office space. Martin Smith Productions (212) 925-6541.

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NEGATIVE MATCHING: 16mm, super 16, 35mm cut for regular printing, blowup, or video transfer. Credits include Jim Jarmusch, Wim Wenders & Lizzie Borden. Reliable results at reasonable rates. One White Glove. Tim Brennan (718) 897-4145.

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NEGATIVE MATCHING: Accurate and clean cutting. 35mm, 16mm for printing or video transfers. Laboratory liaison with Technicolor & Studio Film Lab. CODA FILM's independent clients include Ericka Beckman, Charles Atlas, and Chantal Akerman. Call (212) 265-1191, ask for Andre.

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NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., November 8 for the January/February issue. Send notices to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences • Workshops

FILMMAKING WORKSHOPS offered by the Collective for Living Cinema: Experimental Video taught by William Hohauser, Nov. 7, 8, 14 & 15, tuition $150; Lighting for Film taught by Carl Teitelbaum, Nov. 14, 15 & 21, tuition $110 & Optical Printing taught by Bill Brand, Dec. 5, 6 & 8, tuition $110. Members receive discounts. Registration: The Collective, 41 White St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 925-3926.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS MEDIA TRAINING: 16mm Sound Recording Techniques, Dec. 12 & 13, tuition $200, nonmembers add $10 processing fee; discount to $175 if registration paid by Nov. 25. Stand-by tuition discounts available. Contact: Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE: Fall schedule of workshops & seminars around the US: AFI Campus in Los Angeles—weekend seminars on Feature Film Finance via Limited Partnership, Nov. 7; Making Music, A Filmmaker's Guide to Film Scoring, Nov. 14; Opportunities in Corporate TV, Nov. 21; Assisting the Producer, Computers for Production, Dec. 12 & "Vietnam Revisited" series of screenings & discussions, Nov. 13-Dec. 11. New York City—Breaking into TV, The Writer, Nov. 7 & Writers on Writing, Nov. 21. AFI Theater in Washington, DC—Nuts & Bolts of Screenwriting, Nov. 21 & 22. Minneapolis/St. Paul—Financing & Marketing Ind. Film & Video, Nov. 7. Arizona State U. at Phoenix—Nuts & Bolts of Preproduction, Nov. 14. New Orleans—Art of Film Direction, Nov. 14 & 15. Contact: Public Service Programs; (213) 856-7690 or (800) 221-6248.

INTERNATIONAL ELECTRONIC IMAGING CONFERENCE: Organized by the Institute for Graphic Communication, Nov. 2-5 in Boston. Topics presented in sessions, minicourses & papers will incl. electronic still photography, low-light level TV, advanced infrared imaging systems, morphological image analysis, digital facsimile & image scanners. Public exposition will take place at the World Trade Ctr. on Nov. 3. Contact: MG Expositions Group; (617) 232-3976 or (800) 223-7126.

NEWARK MEDIAWORKS offering video production classes for beginning & intermediate video students: Intermediate Video Editing (Nov. 16, 18, 23) & Production Unit Workshop (Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 28 or Dec. 5, 12, Jan. 2). For info. & registration, contact: Dana Kenney; (201) 690-5474.

Films • Tapes Wanted

C.A.G.E. Video Project seeks tapes for 1987-88 programming yr. Will present collection of exhibitions that group artists by discipline, form, or subject matter. Submissions accepted Sept.-June, 1988. Send tapes & SASE to: C.A.G.E., Box 1362, Cincinnati, OH 45201.

ALIVE FROM OFF CENTER: Nat'l PBS series showcasing new works that fuse the performing arts w/ TV technologies, will preview work for its Summer 1988 season. Submissions accepted through Dec. 1987 & final decisions made by Feb. 1988. Send tapes, max. 30 mins in length on 3/4" or VHS, w/ SASE to: Alive from Off Center, KTCA-TV, 1640 Como Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108.

ARTISTS SPACE Video Program is seeking video work for exhibition. All genres welcome, including experimental narrative, video art, documentary, agitprop, etc. Send preview copies (3/4" NTSC preferred) to: Dan Walworth, film/video curator, Artists Space, 223 W. Broadway, New York, NY 10013; (212) 226-3970.

INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER SHOWCASE/American Cinematek seeks quality 16mm docs, narrative, experimental & animation films for spring 1988 exhibition & festival featuring "theatrical alternative and art house cinema" in Soho, NYC. For further information, send SASE to: IFS/American Cinematek, 141 West 15th St., New York, NY 10011.

HOW-TO VIDEO: 1st newsmonthly dedicated to the special interest video market, now offers "On-Line Library," computerized listing of nontheatrical videos by categories which members can access directly from a modem. Contains over 6,000 video titles complete w/ synopses & distribution info. Contact: How-To Video, 12416 Hymeadow Dr., Austin, TX 78750-1896; (512) 250-9023.

Opportunities • Gigs

CURATOR, VIDEO & PERFORMANCE ART. Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. Position available for curator w/ background in media & performance art & interest in their intersections w/ contemporary art & pop culture. Responsibilities include contract & selection of regular video screenings, multi-week performance series, video exhibits & exhibits integrating those areas within contemporary culture. Curator works independently & as part of curatorial team in developing annual & future programming concepts. Administrative & writing skills required. Salary commensurate w/ exp. Job opens Jan. 1988. Send resumés to: David Ross, director, ICA, 955 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02115.

VIDEO ARTIST RESIDENCY available: Feb. 1988 Interarts Ctr. Production Residency. One wk use of Ikegami 730E color camera & Sony 5850 editing system w/ RM440 controller for personal art work. No stipend. Application deadline: Nov. 23. Send sample tape, resumé & one paragraph description to: Lynn Hershman, Interarts Ctr., San Francisco State U., 1600 Holloway Ave., San Francisco, CA 94132; (415) 338-1478.

NEWTON TELEVISION FOUNDATION is soliciting proposals from independent producers for docs on issues of public concern. Contact: Newton TV Foundation, 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477.

ERIK BARNOUW AWARD, given by the Organization of American Historians, recognizes outstanding reporting or programming on network or cable TV or in documentary film that is concerned with American history, its study, or the promotion of history as a lifetime habit. Winning program will receive certificate & screening at annual OAH conference. Programs released after Jan. 1, 1987, eligible. Submit 16mm film or 3/4" cassette by Dec. 1 to: Robert Rosenstone, Division of Humanities & Social Sciences, Caltech 228-77, Pasadena, CA 91125.

PRODUCERS SEEK SCREENPLAYS for feature film prod. Contact: Authorized Personnel, 314 Carroll St., Brooklyn, NY 11231.

PRODUCER NEEDED for feature film project. Must have experience w/ low budget feature film prod. Contact: Unique Visions, Box 678161, Orlando, FL 32867.

CHANNEL L WORKING GROUP seeks part-time, volunteer staff-person to work directly w/ production supervisor to assist in training & supervision of 15 prod. interns. during fall &/or spring. Position suited for someone w/ strong working knowledge of video but who would like to expand experience in studio & field prod., incl. live call-in programs, docs, psa's, etc. Contact: Channel L Working Group, Prod. Supervisor, 51 Chambers St., Rm. 532, New York, NY 10007; (212) 964-2960.

Publications • Software

MEDIA LOG: Catalog of humanities film, video & radio programs funded by Nat'l Endowment for the Humanities, now available. Over 500 titles on history, archaeology, literature, philosophy & folk traditions w/ synopses & distribution info. Single copies available free of charge from NEH as long as supply lasts. Write: NEH, Office of Publications & Public Affairs, Rm. 409, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

EXTRA! Newsletter of FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting) available at subscription rate of $24/yr. for individuals; $45, institutions; $16, student, senior & unemployed. Contact: FAIR, 666 Broadway, Ste. 400, New York, NY 10012.

INT'L DICTIONARY OF FILMS & FILMMAKERS, Vol. 4: "Writers & Production Artists" edition now available. Guide to behind-the-scenes film professionals incls

bios, filmographies, bibliographies & critical essays. Contact: St. James Press, 425 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 329-0806.

Resources • Funds

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS: Film/Video Production grant application deadline: Nov. 13. Contact: Media Arts Program. Arts Adm. Fellows Program encompasses 13-wks at NEA's Washington, DC offices to become acquainted with the policies & operations of the agency & gain a nat'l overview of arts activities around the country. Deadline: Jan. 8, 1988. Contact: Arts Adm. Fellows Program. NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Next deadline for humanities projects in the media: March 18, 1988. Contact: James Dougherty, NEH, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 786-0378.

NEW YORK STATE FILM EXHIBITION PROGRAM grants available from the Film Bureau. Offered to nonprofit organizations in NYS for film screenings of ind. works or films not ordinarily available to the public. Matching funds of up to $300 are available for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Film Bureau, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING's Open Solicitation deadlines for FY 1988: Jan. 8 & April 22, 1988. For applications, contact: CPB, 1111 16th St NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 955-5100.

REAL ART WAYS Audio & Video Access Center available to independent producers. Fully equipped multitrack recording studio & broadcast quality 3/4" shooting & editing video facility. Subsidies offered for portion of user cost. Consultation, production & technical assistance also provided. Contact: Marty Fegy, technical director or Victor Velt, video curator, Real Art Ways, 94 Allyn St., Hartford, CT, 06103-1402.

Trims & Glitches

KUDOS to finalists of the CPB Program Fund Open Solicitation Round 3 for 1987: James Culp, *The Dragon & the Eagle* & Kathe Sandler, *A Question of Color*.

CONGRATS to Lisa Hsia, whose *Made in China* will be entered by the CPB in the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union's Television Prize Competition in Bankok.

CONGRATULATIONS to Earle Brokenshire whose film *Slice* was awarded 2nd Best Student Film at the Canadian Int'l Annual Film Festival & a commendation from the Sinking Creek Film Celebration.

CONGRATULATIONS to AIVF members awarded film production grants from the New York State Council on the Arts: Jane Aaron, *Wild Life*; Carmen Ashurst, *The Coltrane Project*; Stephanie Beroes, *Margaret Fuller*; Anne Bohlen & Kevin Rafferty, *Right Thinking*; Bill Brand, *Homeless*; Ayoka Chenzira, *Poets on the Dance Floor*; Christine Choy & Lilah Kan, *Shanghai Lil's*; Kavery Dutta, *One Hand Don't Clap: The Story of Calypso Music*; Joel Freedman, *Broken Treaty II*; Amy Goldstein, *Because the Dawn*; Bette Gordon, *V*; Ada Griffin & Michelle Parkerson, *Audre Lorde*; Roland Legiardi-Laura, *Azul*; Yvonne Rainer, *Tales from the White Side*; Rachel Reichman, *Under Thunder*; Pedro Rivera, *Plena Is Work, Plena Is Song*; Deborah Shaffer, *Fire from the Mountain*; J.T. Takagi, *Koreans Apart* & Roy Wilson, *Hunger*.

KUDOS to Deborah Cohen, recipient of a Folk Arts grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

WATER BABY, a one-hour documentary by Karil Daniels, has received a bronze award from the 1987 Houston Int'l Film Festival & Honorable Mention at the 1987 Herland Film & Video Festival.

CONGRATS to the Film Art Fund, which has been awarded a $150,000 challenge grant from the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation to establish a permanent endowment to support to work of independent video & filmmakers in northern California. The John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation has already awarded $50,000 to the endowment.

KUDOS to the recipients of the Artist Access Awards from the Long Beach Museum of Art: Morgan Thomas, *Face It/Embrace Her*; Nancy Buchanan, *Sightlines: A Treatment*; James Seligman, *Refuse* & Doug Henry, untitled.

CONGRATS to winners of the Second Annual Short Film & Video Contest of Paragon Cable Manhattan's movie channel, Uptown: *Mr. President*, by Nan Helm; *Goodbye Soldier*, by Julian Stone; *An Afternoon in the Park*, by William Robertson & *Dean's List*, by Charles Ignacio.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the Governor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

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AIVF MEMBERS SUPPORT PUBLIC TV ADVOCACY

Responses to the letter to AIVF members requesting support for the campaign to secure public television reforms and to establish a National Independent Program Service, have been encouraging. As we approach our deadline for completion of this issue of *The Independent*, AIVF members have donated over $4,500 to the Emergency Legislative Fund, set up to enable AIVF to mobilize support for a new initiative in Congress to guarantee funding, promotion, and distribution of independent film and video. We would like to thank everyone who sent donations and urge those who have not to do so. Send checks (made out to AIVF/Emergency Legislative Fund) or inquiries to: AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

We would like to thank the following contributors to the Emergency Legislative Fund:

Jane Aaron, Peter Adair, Matteo M. Adi, Donnadieu Agnes, Jane Alexander, Judith Aley, Angela Alston, Ann Alter, Richard A. Armstrong, Steven Ascher, James Auer, A. Aviles, Wendy Battles, Amy Beer, Miranda Beeson, David Blair, Whitney Blake, Lawrence Blume, David Boehm, Rose Bond, Eleanor Boyer, Eric Breitbart, Marcello Bue, Peter L. Bull, Stephen Bull, Tracy Burns, Roberta Cantow, Elliot Caplan, David Carnochan, Bernice Coe, Rebecca Coffey, Maida Counts, Marilyn DeMoss, Jean De Segonzac, Bryan Dew, Teresa Drilling, Harvey Edwards, William M. Einreinhofer Jr., Dave Eisenstark, John Engstrom, Sian Evans, Eric Farber, Steve Fisher, Ann Follett, Margaret Foss, Jim Frances, Bernard Friedman, Rick Gell, Bill Gerstenmaier, Will Gethin-Jones, Howard Gladstone, Jill Godmilow, Steven Gomer, Tom Goodwin, Linda Gottfried, Peter Griesinger, George Griffin, Alex Griswold, Bert Guthrie, Steven Harris, Julie Harrison, Jean Haynes, Bob Hazen, Kathy Hersh, Charles Herzfeld, David Hoffman, Larry Hott, Daniel Housberg, Annette Insdorf, Mark Irwin, Barbara O. Jackson, Christopher C. Johnson, Jeep Johnson, Russ Johnson, Gloria Kaufman, Nicholas Kent, Julia Keydel, Harvey Klein, Lucy Kostelanetz, Libby Kreutz, Jerry Kupfer, Pacho Lane, Dominique Lasseur, Kirk Lavine, Steven D. Lavine, Lauren Lazin, Craig Leake, Jeanne LePage, Eve Levy, Linda M. Lewett, Regge Life, Lorie Loeb, Lexy Lovell, Patricia Luchsinger, Larry Lundy, Theodore Lyman, Lori Maass, Dennis P. Maneri, Leslie Mason, Bill McCord, John Mernit, Eric Mofford, Cynthia and Allen Mondell, Allen Moore, Charlene Morris, Jean Morrissey, Patrick Mullins, Ann Mundy, Eric Muzzy, Betsy Newman, Abigail Norman, Don North, Amram Nowak, Maureen O'Brien, Jana Odette, Paul N. Paliyenko, Jack Parsons, Matthew Patrick, Andrew Pearson, Ellen Povill, Mathew Price, John M. Pugliese Jr., Yvonne Rainer, Julia Reichert, Virginia Reticker, Michael Rose, Jim Rosellini, Rosemary Rotondi, Audrey Russano, Catherine Saalfield, Lawrence Sapadin, Irving Saraf, Richard Schmiechen, John Schott, Nancy Schreiber, Moe Schwartz, Gene Searchinger, Deborah Shaffer, Roger Sherman, George Shkapenko, Patricia Sides, Margaret Smilow, Joseph Sopiak, Pauline Spiegel, Chris Spotted Eagle, Brad Stapleton, Peggy Stern, George C. Stoney, Jane F. Strausbaugh, Kent Strumpell, Tapper Productions, Hugh Taylor, Theresa Tollini, Barbara Van Dyke, Elaine Velazquez, Video Events International, Deb Wallwork, Jack Walz, Katrina Waters, Susan Wehling, Jane Weiner, Lawrence Barr Weissman, Dean Wetherell, Jonathan Wiedemann, Sue Williams, Susan Winter, Gerry Wurzburg, Suzanne Zack, David Zema, Cathy Zheutlin, Todd Zimmer.

Another fund for the same purpose has been established by the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers, of which AIVF is a leading member. To date, donations to the Coalition's fund total $525, contributed by: Bob Brodsky, Wendy Lidell, Nathan Lyons, the Media Project, the Moving Image, the Neighborhood Film Project, and Toni Treadway. Checks made out to AIVF/National Coalition Fund can also be sent to the address above.

Finally, the Benton Foundation has awarded the Foundation for Independent Video and Film a $7,500 grant for research and education on independent media and public television.

The December issue of *The Independent* will contain an update on the Coalition's last meeting and related organizing efforts for the National Independent Program Service and other public television reform, as well as additions to the list of contributors.

FIVF UNDERTAKES RESEARCH ON INTERNATIONAL FILM/ VIDEO RESOURCES

The Rockefeller Foundation has awarded FIVF a grant of $15,000 to research and computerize data on international resources for independent film and television production. Begun this fall, the research will identify a network of individuals, agencies, and noncommercial and commercial media organizations that assist independent producers working abroad. The research will focus on Africa, Asia, and Latin American.

This project is the first phase of an FIVF proposal to convene an international conference on independent production, with a long-term goal of establishing a permanent global network of independent producer organizations.

The research findings will be published next year as an international guide to media resources, which will include listings of independent producers, distributors, and exhibitors in these regions. Members of the media community are encouraged to notify FIVF of media groups in other countries who should be contacted for the guide. Write to Karen Ranucci, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

FILM FESTIVAL SELECTIONS AT FIVF

Representatives of the Films de Femmes International Film Festival of Creteil in France, the Montreal International Festival of Films and Videos by Women in Canada, and the Oberhausen International Festival of Short Films in West Germany will be in New York City at FIVF's office to preselect entries for their festivals. See the "In Brief" column in this issue for entry details, dates, and deadlines.

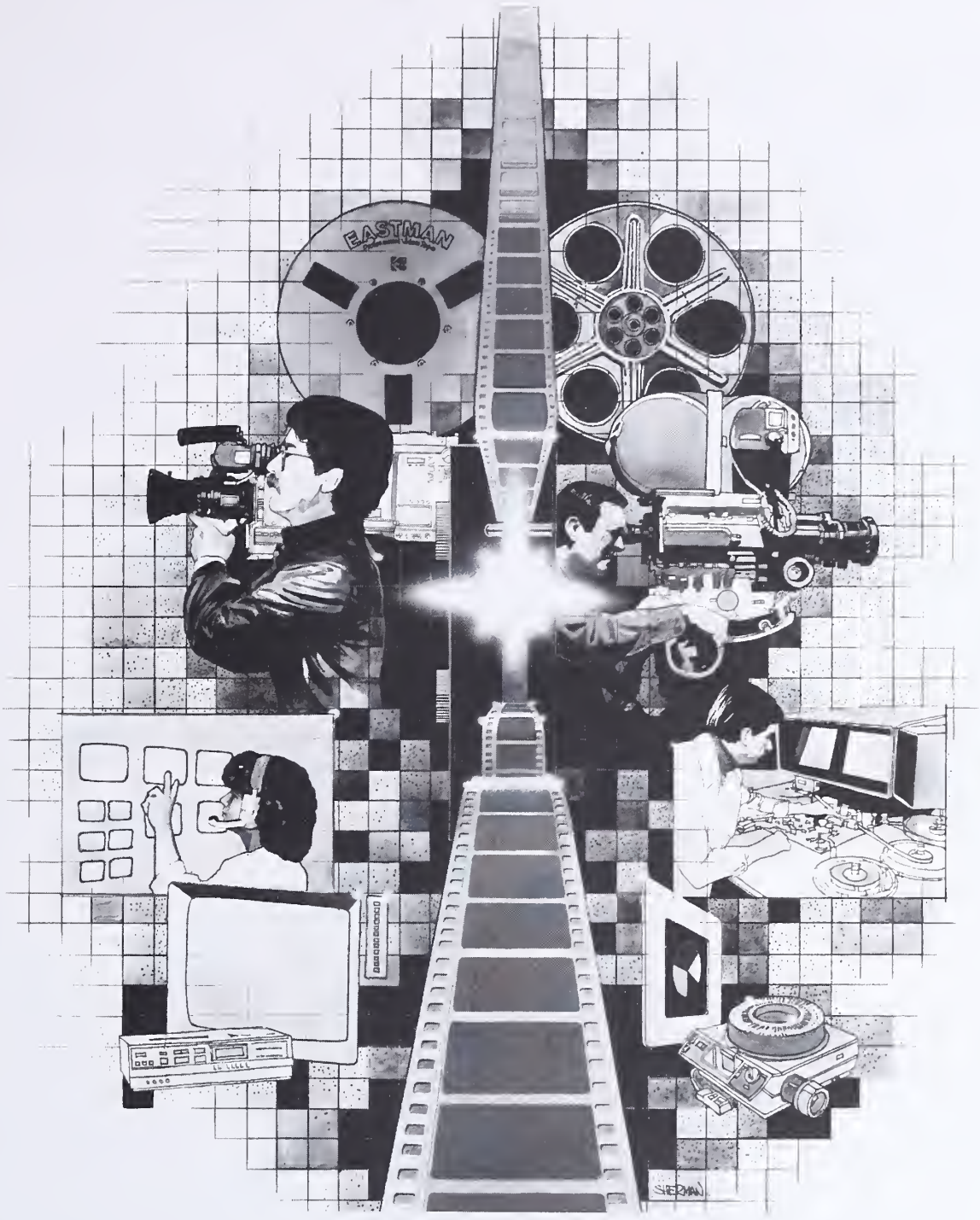
NEW LIFE INSURANCE PLAN FOR AIVF MEMBERS

We are pleased to offer AIVF members a new, non-discriminatory group life insurance plan. The plan offers $150,000 life insurance and accidental death and dismembership insurance, and requires *no medical examination*. A short form questionnaire is the only application required.

Like AIVF's group medical and disability income plans, this program is administered by The Entertainment Industry Group Insurance Trust (TEIGIT) and underwritten by Connecticut General Life Insurance Company. For more information, write AIVF Membership Services, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York NY 10012, or call Ethan Young at (212) 473-3400.

1987 FIVF DONOR-ADVISED GRANTS ANNOUNCED

Last spring the Foundation for Independent Video and Film announced a new Donor-Advised Fund to award grants for the production and distribution of film and video works. Ninety-six applications were received, and an FIVF screening panel met in late August to recommend funding for projects on peace-related issues to the Benton Foundation and for projects on environmental issues to the Beldon Fund. Although the Marjorie Benton Peace Award of $5,000 remains unannounced, a $10,000 grant for Robert Bilheimer, Robert Mix, and Kevin Harris' film *The Cry of Reason* has been awarded by the Benton Foundation. Grants from the Beldon Fund for production, editing, completion, or distribution of works dealing with environmental issues have been given to Nicolas Kaufman for *Legal Action: Your Right to a Clean Environment* ($5,000), Andrew Young for *Voices from Kuna Yala* ($10,000), Bonnie Friedman for *Not in My Backyard* ($5,000), and Ann Johnson and Mimi Pickering for *Chemical Valley, USA* ($5,000).



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Join **AIVF** today and get a one-year subscription to **THE INDEPENDENT** Magazine. Yearly membership rates are $35 individual; (add $10 for first class mailing of **THE INDEPENDENT**); $20 student (enclose proof of student ID); $50 library (subscription only); $75 organization; $45 foreign (outside the US, Canada and Mexico). Send check or money order to:

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The National Educational Film & Video Festival
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ENTRY DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 1, 1987

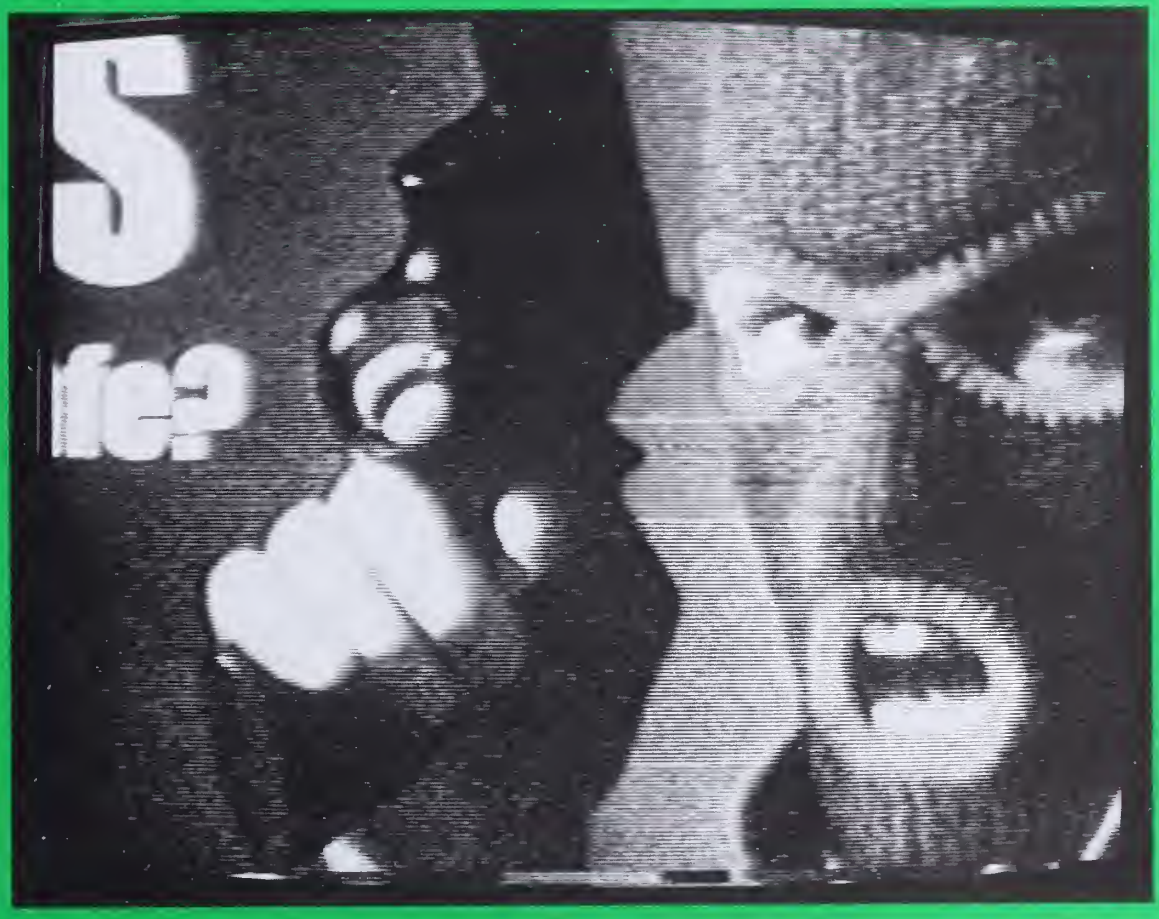
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Courtesy New Museum

COVER: In "'Video Art,' Its Audience, Its Public," Martha Rosler discusses the breakdown of the distinction between public and private spheres and the effect of their growing interdependence on how video is made and perceived. For example, she asks, "How can there be said to be a private sphere, when the image of the terrorist, the grisly specter of death of the private and public alike, is put beside me at the family dinner table?" Photo from Rosler's *A Simple Case for Torture, or How to sleep at night*, courtesy Video Data Bank.

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LETTERS

BRAVE NEW VIDEO

To the editor:

Reading Renee Tajima's "The Video Trade: Part 1, The Distributors" [October 1987], I was surprised to see no mention made of New Video's Independents Series. While Tajima speaks about the unlikeliness of Video Shack customers passing up Hollywood hits in favor of "an anthology of tapes by Zbigniew Rybczynski" and discusses the partnership between the Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions bookstore and Santa Monica's Vidiots store, she fails to mention that New York City's New Video pioneered the distribution of artists' tapes to a home video market.

At New Video, customers do occasionally venture into brave new rentals—the stores carry tapes by video artists (Dara Birnbaum, Kit Fitzgerald, Matthew Geller, Joan Jonas, and William Wegman, among others, plus packages from Pacific Arts and Electronic Arts Intermix); experimental films transferred to video (including films by Robert Breer, Ericka Beckman, Jonas Mekas, and Bill Brand); work from New York independent directors Jim Jarmusch, Lynne Tillman and Sheila McLaughlin, Spike Lee, Bette Gordon, Amos Poe, and Sara Driver; as well as documentary films (including tapes by Les Blank and Emile De Antonio). This not insubstantial omission slights the commitment to broadening the home video market made by New Video owners Steve Savage, Michael Pollack, and Howard Lagoze, as well as the Independent Series' curator, Dan Ochiva.

—Katherine Dieckmann
editor of Summer 1987 issue, *New Video* magazine
New York, NY

Renee Tajima replies:

New Video's Independents Series was included in an annotated list of distributors in the second part of my article on nonbroadcast video distribution in the November issue of *The Independent*, although not presented as a replicable model or primary institution in the video distribution scene. The series has already received a great deal of attention among independent producers, but videomakers I spoke with considered its importance more symbolic than economically meaningful. Because my article is directed to videomakers as a guide to practical options for distribution, I chose not to discuss the Independents Series in depth.

MAKING HISTORY: PBS' *AMERICAN EXPERIENCE*

A test of the historical knowledge among students at a community college in Olympia, Washington, turned up the following beliefs: "Ralph Nader is a baseball player. Charles Darwin invented gravity. Christ was born in the sixteenth-century. J. Edgar Hoover was a nineteenth-century president. *The Great Gatsby* was a magician in the 1930s. Franz Josef Haydn was a songwriter during the same decade. Mark Twain invented the cotton gin... William Faulkner made his name as a seventeenth-century scientist. All of these people must have appreciated the work of Pablo Picasso, who painted masterpieces in the twelfth century."

So noted history professor David Kennedy before a gathering of historians, independent producers, station managers, and staff from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and PBS station WGBH-Boston. Kennedy et al. were invited by WGBH to attend a planning conference in June 1986 for a new documentary series, *American Experience*, which is scheduled to premiere on PBS in the fall of 1988. A project of stations WGBH, WNET-New York, and KCET-Los Angeles, *American Experience* will focus on the history and heritage of the United States in 16 one-hour programs. Its organizers plan to use television to counteract what they deem one of television's negative effects. As stated in their grant proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities, "We hope to counter the impression often created by the barrage of information in the modern world that events occur without antecedents and disappear without legacies. In the process, we hope to play a part in the rebuilding of a coherent sense of the American past."

For the most part, *American Experience* will be a documentary series, although its executive producer, Judy Crichton, is open to the possibility of an occasional dramatic work. It is the only national documentary series to have been launched on PBS since *Frontline* in 1982. With CPB's Program Fund providing backing to the tune of $3-million for the first season and an additional $3-million likely for the second, *American Experience* is among the Program Fund's top beneficiaries, together with *MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour*, *WonderWorks*, *Frontline*, *American Playhouse*, and *Great Performances*. In addition to this considerable commitment from CPB, *American Experience* has also received support from the NEH ($80,000 for script development) and over $1.2-million in pledges from public television stations at last year's Station Program Cooperative Fair. Support is also expected for the 1989 season from stations at the Program Fair in November.

In a letter to WGBH, Program Fund director Ron Hull stipulated that "a significant percent of (*American Experience*'s) productions will be the work of independent producers." As Hull explained, "The economics of the project preclude the hiring and maintaining of staff producers, and the topics seem to be well-suited for the independent." *American Experience*'s overall budget for the first season of 16 programs is around $6-million. This breaks down to $50-$100,000 per acquisition and programs completed with series funding, and approximately $300,000 for each commissioned new work. But technically this money cannot be viewed as a new pool for independent production, since the programs (except acquisitions) are ultimately *station* productions: while producers have final cut, the stations will be involved in editorial decision-making; WGBH, WNET, and KCET retain copyright on commissioned works, but will negotiate in the other cases; and program selection is done by Crichton and staff, rather than through peer panel review. Nonetheless, each season a handful of independents stand to benefit from the financial support, national visibility, and general caché that *American Experience* will provide.

The first season's line-up was almost complete in October. Contract negotiations for commissioned programs were either settled or close to it. The commissions which are likely for the first season, contingent upon contract approval, are for programs on the Apollo Theater, to be produced by George Nierenberg; a work by Irv Drasnin on Father Coughlin; William Greaves' profile on Paul Robeson; a study of Geronimo and the Apache resistance, by Neil Goodwin; an archival film on Pearl Harbor, by Tom Johnson and Lance Bird (probably slotted for the second season); *The Fall and Rise of San Francisco: The 1906 Quake*, by Tom Weidlinger; and a program based on Eric Severaids' book, *Not So Wild a Dream*, by Anthony Potter. Mark Obenhaus will probably produce a commissioned work for the first season, although the subject has not yet been finalized; his original proposal, for a program on Robert Moses, may appear in the second season. WGBH is hop-



Angie Debo, who went South in a covered wagon and later discovered a conspiracy to rob Indians of their Oklahoma land, is the subject of Barbara Abrash and Martha Sandlin's documentary for *American Experience*.

Courtesy Institute for Research in History

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ing to commission one or two more productions, but the total number will depend on their ability to locate additional funding from corporate sponsors and foundations. The remaining programs will be acquisitions and coproductions. One coproduction already in progress is Barbara Abrash and Martha Sandlin's program on Angie Debo. The complete list will be announced at the Program Fair in November.

Within the independent community, reaction to *American Experience* is mixed. The list of producers has drawn a consistently favorable response. CPB promised that the series would be mainly by independent producers—and so far it is. Feedback from producers directly involved has also been positive. Barbara Abrash is quite comfortable with the flexibility and collaborative attitude Crichton exhibited in contract negotiations and working relations. "They've been very up front about what their needs are, and they've dealt with us very honestly," says Abrash. WGBH's editorial control "is not couched in a language where we are being victimized." Lance Bird, who was once quite skeptical of the series, changed his opinion after observing Crichton's willingness to consider new approaches and her openness to other producers with limited experience. Bird repeatedly stressed, "Producers should be encouraged to send in proposals. It would be awful if the general feeling went out that this series is closed, or if people were turned off from applying."

But not everyone is satisfied with *American Experience*'s procedures. There have been complaints about the call for proposals, which reached independents—but not stations—only after considerable pressure from independents. There has been confusion over *de facto* versus publicized deadlines. And, other than the June 1986 planning conference, there has been no formal mechanism for input from independents concerning contracts and solicitation procedures. These would be nonissues if independents thought *American Experience* was to be set up like another *Frontline*, with its small stable of favored producers whose work for *Frontline* no one but CPB considers "independent." But expectations are otherwise, based on the many indications, if not outright promises, that *American Experience* would be different.

Ever since November 1985 when Hull first announced that CPB was putting Program Fund money into this series and it was billed as a showcase for independents, the independent community has pressed CPB for guarantees that they would be involved, both as operational consultants and as program providers. At the planning conference the question of independent input regarding contracts and the solicitation process was pursued by Lawrence Daressa, co-chair of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers and president of California Newsreel. Daressa recalls being given "definite assurances" at the meeting by Marilyn Mellows, *American Experience*'s story editor, that WGBH would consult with independents on both matters. "But they have never contacted me once," says Daressa. While Mellows remembers solicitation and contracts being discussed, she does not recall making any such promises, which, she adds, would have been beyond her jurisdiction. Subsequently, in January 1987, National Coalition co-chair and Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers executive director Lawrence Sapadin wrote to Hull, requesting that "CPB instruct WGBH to establish an advisory committee of independent producer representatives, from the ranks of the National Coalition, to advise and facilitate independent involvement in the new series." While Hull had previously encouraged the Coalition to investigate a role in the initiative, his subsequent letter to WBGH on the series' structure and operations sidesteps the issue of an independent advisory panel, naming only a Historical Advisory Panel (which has since been established and utilized) and an undefined Management Advisory Board. Crichton says that, in the course of her one-to-one meetings with over a hundred producers since coming aboard a year ago, she has gotten considerable feedback about their concerns. But, in general, Crichton is less interested in listening to people "tell me how to run the candy shop" than in hearing ideas from independent producers about creative ways of putting history on film.

In his letter to Hull, Sapadin also relayed the Coalition's concerns about publicizing and timing of solicitations. To this, Hull responded directly and positively, directing WGBH in his letter, "You will use the *Program Fund News* as a means of communicating the projects' needs to producers—both independent and public television stations," and, "There will be a timeframe for proposal submission and review which will provide for a timely response for proposals submitted within it." But subsequently CPB did not enforce these requirements.

The solicitation and decision-making process WGBH used has confused more than a few producers. December 1, 1987, was the official deadline, which was announced in the guidelines sent to public television stations early last spring and eventually published in the *Program Fund News* in May. Independents not on CPB's mailing list or not hooked into the public television system through formal or informal contacts did not see the guidelines—or in many cases learn about the series—until the summer, when they appeared in *The Independent* and in media arts newsletters. In the spring, several Coalition members tried getting the guidelines directly from WGBH, but were "given the run-around," according to Gordon Quinn. Not helping matters was CPB's laissez-faire posture. Hull told Coalition members at their meeting last April that no guidelines yet existed. When Quinn pulled out his copy, Hull, surprised and duly chagrined, promised to run them in the next *Program Fund News*.

Meanwhile, WGBH was already moving

ahead with some program choices. Certain producers were under consideration as far back as 1986, when WGBH applied for NEH funding for four potential programs. In their research and development phase, WGBH had made contact with numerous producers, some of whom ended up in the final line-up. Other producers heard about the series through friends at stations or other contacts, and started talking with WGBH last spring. The net result was that the first season was closed long before the December deadline.

Coalition member Deborah Lefkowitz was told by WGBH in September that the season was full, and Boston producer Nancy Baer was discouraged from applying as far back as May. While "WGBH didn't say 'don't submit,'" says Baer, they made it clear that they had already received more than enough material for the first season.

Crichton now feels that the December deadline did not make much sense. "I'm not so sure that for 1989 we're going to suggest these kinds of arbitrary deadlines. Rather, we might give people an opening [date for accepting proposals], and when we're closed, we're closed. I think that's more sensible."

In response to the complaint that WGBH did not take the initiative to reach the independent community, Crichton counters by pointing out that "people from Seattle to Maine and West Virginia to Oklahoma have found me." She believes that they are successfully reaching serious producers capable of producing substantial hour-long documentaries on U.S. history. "I don't believe there are hundreds of people who do the work we do. I suspect there are scores of people."

Once through the door, there are few producers who feel Crichton hasn't given them a fair shake. But as Quinn pointed out, "Judy Crichton is not what we're complaining about. The real problem is getting information to independents. When independents don't get information, it usually means they're not that welcome."

While *American Experience* gears up, *The American Documentary*, another station consortium project and showcase for acquisitions by independents, is moving ahead in fits and starts. Executive producer Marc Weiss says that much of the funding—$550,000 out of the total $750,000 budget—is in place, and will come from CPB, the Harris Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, and, most probably, from the National Endowment for the Arts. Weiss sent out a call for tapes in mid-October through a 15,000-piece mailing to producers. The only problem was that entries had to be postmarked by November 6, leaving producers only a short time to prepare their submissions. This delay was credited to down-to-the-wire "funding uncertainties" and the need to list funders on the guidelines. Weiss expects to announce a final list of programs, selected through a "hybrid executive producer/panel process," sometime in February.

PATRICIA THOMSON

INDEPENDENTS AND CPB CONFER IN SAN FRANCISCO

In mid-September, the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers held its most recent meeting with Corporation for Public Broadcasting Program Fund representatives in San Francisco. In addition to Program Fund director Ron Hull, his staff, and eight Coalition representatives—Frank Blythe, Deborah Lefkowitz, Mark Mori, Gordon Quinn, Marlon Riggs, Lawrence Sapadin, Pamela Yates, and Jim Yee—several public television station personnel also attended, as did Jeffrey Gable, associate director of Children's and Cultural Programming at the Public Broadcasting Service, and one CPB board member, Daniel Brenner. Brenner's presence acted as a catalyst to expedite several of the Coalition's inquiries concerning the administration of the Program Fund. And, on questions of production support, some of the comments by station representatives confirmed experiences of independent producers.

Hull notified the Coalition that he is proposing an increase of $2-million in the Open Solicitations fund for 1990, following repeated requests by the Coalition that this program, the primary source of CPB funding for smaller independent producers, be expanded. It has remained stagnant at approximately $6-million per year while the funds assigned to series have steadily been on the rise. Open Solicitations is currently the only Program Fund category that uses peer panels to recommend funding, and San Francisco independent Riggs asked the CPB representatives whether their guidelines issued to panelists were ever revised to include criteria of "innovation" and "diversity" as recommended by the Coalition at a previous meeting. The Fund's associate director of Drama and Arts Jennifer Lawson answered that they had considered the proposal but decided that the current guidelines were adequate.

As the result of recent studies of Program Fund reports and the percentages of funding allocated for independent production conducted by Coalition members, Sapadin followed Hull's financial report to the group with questions concerning a discrepancy in the Fund's annual reports. A gap consistently appears, Sapadin pointed out, between the Fund's annual allocation from Congress and the amount accounted for in its year-end financial statement. For 1987, the difference amounted to $5-million. That sum, Hull said, represents the funds jointly managed by CPB's Education Department, earmarked for children's programming. Its absence from Program Fund documentation occurs because of the co-management structure, he added. But, as Sapadin noted, this bookkeeping method might easily benefit the Fund in its calculation of the percentage of independent work funded, since failure to include this

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amount artificially inflates the proportion CPB claims to give to independents. Brenner then requested that Hull revise the financial report to reflect the disbursement of the full amount of the Fund's allocation. Other questions about the Program Fund's financial record-keeping remain unanswered, however, especially a request from the Coalition for a program-by-program breakdown of its grants to major series like *American Playhouse*, *WonderWorks*, and *Frontline*, which account for the majority of Program Fund expenditures.

The newest CPB-funded series, *American Experience*, generated discussion of related matters, including the producing station consortia's accountability to the Program Fund, which has already given $1.5-million to the series with another $1.5-million budgeted for 1988. Many of the questions raised at the meeting are reported in Patricia Thomson's article in this column, but of particular interest in this context is WETA-Washington program manager Joyce Campbell's comment that stations share some of the frustrations expressed by independent producers who tried to obtain precise guidelines, deadlines, and so on.

When Donald Marbury, associate director of Cultural and Children's Programming at the Program Fund, announced that two research and development grants have been awarded for a 26-part series for children and pilot programs are underway, Riggs inquired about efforts to involve independent producers. Echoing the dialogue conducted at the time when plans for *American Experience* were unveiled, Marbury replied that he would bring this up with the series' executive producer once a decision between the two candidates, *WonderWorks* and WNYC-New York, was made.

The Coalition and station representatives saw eye to eye on another topic that arose at the meeting: the possibility of a Program Fund-administered acquisition fund for shorts that would be offered to stations to fill out programs of irregular length. Proposed by Riggs, the idea was endorsed by Campbell, who suggested that shorts could be distributed by the Interregional Program Service. In fact, all the station reps agreed that this was a useful and practical solution for some of their programming needs, but Hull preferred that producers deal directly with stations through the IPS, since CPB traditionally does not fund acquisitions. Nevertheless, he requested that Riggs send him a letter outlining the proposal, which he will discuss within CPB.

Some common ground was also established in a discussion of step-up funding, a regular topic broached by the Coalition at meetings with CPB staff. Nat Katzman of KQED-San Francisco agreed with Coalition representatives that CPB should give a higher priority to step-up funding for works aired on PBS. Last year, Hull reported, the amount available for step-ups was $139,000, and both station and Coalition reps concurred that a larger amount was needed. Another piece of old business was considered when Boston independent Lefkowitz suggested that CPB's fund for promotion of independent work slated for PBS broadcast, established as a result of a Coalition proposal, be increased and opened up to work not funded by CPB. Hull replied that he would consider the matter and report his decision to the group.

Chicago independent Quinn used the presence of station representatives to inquire about the possibility of stations appointing liaisons with independent producers, but no action was taken on this matter. Reports were given on various station-sponsored showcases of independent work, and Coalition members noted the inconsistency in acquisition fees—in the words of one station rep, from "laughably low" to $10 to $15 per minute. Brenner asked whether CPB could publish a manual for independents on the local station markets for their work.

The meeting with the Program Fund and station reps provided Coalition members with an opportunity to meet among themselves to confer on the outcome of what had transpired and to continue discussions of the proposal for public television reform and an independent program service [see *The Independent*, August/September 1987, p. 36]. Heeding many suggestions from various quarters that the proposed new entity be given an alternative name, with an acronym that didn't repeat that of the existent IPS, the group rechristened the project NIPS: the National Independent Program Service. Subsequently, AIVF has hired Janet Cole, an independent producer and former director of advertising and promotion at First Run Features, to coordinate the national educational and legislative effort.

MARTHA GEVER

WORK IN THE WORKS

Productions-in-Progress, a databank of current television and film productions, has published the first issue of its reference index. Over 300 projects are listed in the guide by numerical code. Each listing is cross-referenced by categories such as program area, production stage, intended audience, format, and individual crew members, and also indexed by topics, including geographical region or special issues like environment, women, native Americans, and the elderly. But the list is not alphabetized, making it difficult to search for specific titles.

Based on the index, subscribers can request detailed reports about projects—a list of its funders, production personnel, or the producers' synopses, for example. According to P-I-P president Richard Huber, the database is designed to reach various types of subscribers. Funders and investors can identify projects to finance at any stage, from research and development to distribution, or advertising agencies can keep abreast of new productions that are relevant to client interests. Independent producers would probably find the service useful in checking for competing projects, researching funding, or checking for references when hiring crew members. Annual subscriptions for the service are calculated on a sliding scale: $250 for corporations, $150 for nonprofits, and $75 for independent producers. Detailed reports are $10 each. Contact: P-I-P, Box 23562, L'Enfant Plaza, Washington, DC 20026; (202) 488-0717.

RENEE TAJIMA

WESTWARD HO FOR EFLA

The Educational Film Library Association, longtime sponsor of the American Film and Video Festival, now has a new name and home. The newly dubbed American Film and Video Association has relocated from its New York City office to La Grange Park, Illinois, a Chicago suburb. AFVA decided to leave New York after its last rent hike—up to almost $40,000 per year for its offices in downtown Manhattan. The group will share its new space in a former school building that houses educational organizations and nonprofits with the Suburban Audio Visual Service—at considerably lower rent. Ron MacIntyre, AFVA's newly hired executive director, will continue at his post in Illinois. The annual festival will not be affected by the move and will go on as scheduled on May 23-28, at the Omni Park Central Hotel in New York City. AFVA's new address is: 920 Barnsdale Rd., Ste. 152, La Grange Park, IL 60525; (312) 482-4000.

RT

SAM BRODY: 1907-1987

On September 9, the day after his eightieth birthday, Sam Brody died after suffering a fall in his Connecticut home. An advocate and practitioner of film as an organizing tool for social change, a pioneer of film theory, and a champion of the documentary form, Brody left a powerful legacy.

Among his earliest efforts was as a camera operator for *The Passaic Textile Strike* (1926), one of the first films used by labor organizers in the U.S. In 1930, when New York's police chief suppressed commercial newsreel footage of police violence against an unemployment demonstration in Union Square, Brody presaged independent radical media when he commented, "If the capitalist class fears pictures and prevents us from seeing records of events like the unemployment demonstration and the Sacco-Vanzetti trial, we will equip our own cameramen and make our own films." Chiding early leftist filmmakers for limiting themselves to mere "cultural activity," he argued, "If we can show to the foreign-born


FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
THE INDEPENDENT



workers of New Bedford a film of striking native American textile workers of the South, we have transcended the limits of what we classify as 'cultural.'"

In 1931 a group of Communist and radical filmmakers formed the Film and Photo League to educate workers, oppose censorship, challenge the use of film as a weapon of reaction, and document the Depression and the growing working class movement. The FPL produced a series of powerful newsreels that were shown in churches, community centers, and union halls throughout the country.

Building upon the work of the early Soviet filmmakers, Brody helped develop a theory of political film in the U.S. In his writings for *New Theatre* and *Experimental Cinema*, and in his translations for the FPL newsletter *Filmfront*, Brody was the first to bring the writings of Dziga Vertov to the U.S. Like Vertov, Brody saw documentary as the only "medium for revolutionary film," and rejected dramatic narrative in favor of "movie reportage: reality recorded on film strips and subjected to painstaking technical operations, montage, whereby these strips are built up into wholes embodying our revolutionary interpretation of events." As some radical filmmakers moved away from this concept of "synthetic documentary" in search of a more conventional dramatic narrative aesthetic, Brody maintained his stance. Divisions over this question led to the eventual dissolution of the FPL.

Brody also served as film editor of *New Theatre* and wrote satirical commentary on the film scene for *Filmfront* and the *Daily Worker* under the pseudonym "Lens." After World War Two he worked in Hollywood and elsewhere as a laboratory technician. He will be remembered for his wit, vitality, and dedication to social and economic justice.

STEVE KRINSKY AND ETHAN YOUNG

STEVE SEIFERT: 1951-1987

New York film publicist Steve Seifert died at age 36 of AIDS-related pneumonia on August 16. Seifert, who established the firm Steve Seifert Associates (now Seifert and White) in 1981, was known as a tireless promoter of challenging films, including many works by North American independents. Among the features whose audiences Seifert helped build were *The Two Worlds of Angelita*, by Jane Morrison; *Cutter's Way*, by Ivan Passer; *Say Amen, Somebody*, by George Nierenberg; *Lianna*, by John Sayles; *Pumping Iron II: The Women*, by George Butler; and *Ticket to Heaven*, by Ralph L. Thomas.

"Steve was interested in quality films. He was the only publicist who had to see a film before he would represent it," recalled Ira Deutchman of Cinecom Pictures. "He was one of the few who realized that all the exciting work was from American independents."

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PAS DE DEUX: CHOREOGRAPHERS AND PRODUCERS PAIR UP AT SUNDANCE



Robin Romano shoots a dance sequence choreographed by Elisa Monte, with performers Kim Strunk and Steven Brown.

Photo: Sandria Miller

Deirdre Towers

In 1980 the actor Robert Redford founded the Sundance Institute for Film and Television in the mountains of Utah to support independent filmmaking and encourage a humanist cinema. The film industry had never seen anything like it, before or since. With its intense sense of community, its network and resource bank, Sundance quickly became known as a sought after oasis. From the initial one-month laboratory for filmmakers, the Institute has expanded to include programs for playwrights, composers, producers, and, this summer, a dance/film/video lab.

Endorsing dance/film/video as an art form worthy of attention was both magnanimous and adventurous on the part of Sundance. It's magnanimous in that the program is a gesture to the dance world, which is now incorporating video more and more as part of its structure for survival, rather than a response to a crying need voiced by film- or videomakers. Redford sees Sundance as "a place where new ground can be broken, lines can be crossed, and high standards reached—ultimately the projects it nurtures can be tested in the marketplace." That statement reflects both a pioneering as well as entrepreneurial spirit. Dance/film/video seems to inspire a similarly ambivalent drive. The box office success of *Turning Point*, *Flashdance*, *White Nights*, and now *Dirty Dancing* brought dance back to a mass audience after a considerable hiatus—and with a different point of view. Even though filmmakers have been exploring choreography expressly for the camera since Eisenstein (with a respectful bow to the experiments of Maya Deren in the forties), the Hollywood approach to dance has often been timid. Not quite as thrilling as a car chase or as much fun as a saloon brawl, the incorporation of dance as cinematic "action" presents problems, choreographers being a prime one. They seem to have their *own* ideas. But at the Sundance lab, choreographers and camera people were allowed to test some of those ideas. While there are a few choreographers, such as Paula Abdul whose work can be seen in many award-winning music videos, who have never worked for the stage, most are only just beginning to consider the possibilities of designing with malleable images rather than full figures seen at a distance.

Two years ago Sundance invited members of the Ballet West Company to use their facilities for a choreography project. Around the same time the National Choreography Project, an effort to match ballet companies with freelance choreographers, was just gaining momentum, and so the dance program at Sundance was discontinued after its first year, since its reason for existence

was being answered elsewhere. Last year a panel of dance and film experts met to discuss how Sundance could help the dance community. The resulting plan, tested this year from August 17 to September 6, involved four modern choreographers, four independent film- and videomakers, all of whom had worked with dance before, and 10 resource people. Each of the choreographers—Kenneth Rinker, Elisa Monte, Sara Elgart, and Charles Moulton—brought two dancers, and the Repertory Dance Theatre, based in Salt Lake City, provided another 12.

"We're overstimulated," said Elgart, who's had multiple opportunities to experiment with film in her home base, Los Angeles, but never one in which she could realize her own vision without conceding to the wishes of a producer. With 35 music videos and several feature-films to her credit, Elgart was thrilled to have the chance to have Roger Christiansen film "the imagery of a dream within the reality of a dance."

Instead of supporting individual artists, as the other Sundance labs do, this summer's lab helped to crystalize the collective state of dance/film/video, exposing both immaturities and potentials. As with any program in its first year, there were some organizational and communication snags, but according to artistic director John Clifford, former director of the Los Angeles Ballet, the lab was largely successful in encouraging breakthroughs by several participating artists. Orientation towards a risk-taking process versus creating a product possibly bound for commercial broadcast caused some tension, as did the varying levels of experience among the participants.

Within the small assembled group, there was a stubborn divergence of tastes and philosophies. However, several basic issues become clear; one paramount concern that surfaced is the need to establish a common language between the choreographer and the video- or filmmaker. How much should the camera move, and at which points of the dance? What distance should the camera be from the dancers, what angles, what lighting, what location, how many cameras? What rhythms, independent of the original, can be created in the editing process? How much should a video- or filmmaker introduce his or her own personality or analysis of the dance? James Byrne gave the excerpt of Kenneth Rinker's dance an ominous feeling, while Robin Romano picked up the nightmare climax of Elisa Monte's solo in "Pigs & Fishes." How much could the choreographer extend an original idea based on the response from the film- or videomaker?

Mary Perillo and John Sanborn, the innovative video team, thought their Sundance stay as resource people was of minimal impact. They felt that a clearer structure for the lab would have made more effective use of all the resource people: Elliott Caplan, Sergio Cervetti, Martha Clarke, Stanley Donen, Jeffrey Hornaday, Michael Kidd, Paul Ryan, and Linda Smith. Beyond the daily scheduling of studio and editing times, there was no monitoring of individual projects.



Independent videomaker Skip Blumberg (right) works with Sundance technical crew Denaise Hall (left) and Jeff Koh in the summer's dance/film/video lab.

Courtesy videomaker

There w
of the artists. There was a sense of frustration also expressed by Stanley Donen, who seemed puzzled by many of the projects. Donen, the director of such classics as *Singing in the Rain*, *Funny Face*, and *Royal Wedding*, and director/choreographer Michael Kidd come from an era in which the charisma of the individual dancer and choreography were all-important. Their approach resembled that of Merrill Brockway and other directors of early *Dance in America* programs, whose dedication to a clear documentation of first-rate performances determined their minimal camera involvement. Donen's irritation was evident when he said, "I keep wanting to see the dance, instead of some weird camera idea."

After seeing a clip of James Byrne's hand-held camera work with Kenneth Rinker, Donen asked, "What were you trying to do?" "Well, I'm organic," replied Byrne. "I look at the dance and try to see what it is." Rinker, a former dancer for Twyla Tharp who assisted her in filming *Hair*, let Byrne have free reign to show how an excerpt from a ballet he'd just choreographed for the Hartford Ballet could evolve into a video piece. "In one section we were exploring, I found I was more interested in the transitions. The still moments were dead, but focusing on transitions heightened the stillnesses. Then I tried to find some sort of logic in the editing." Donen followed up, "In most of your pieces though, you work with a story, or a character, or a feeling?" "Yes," Byrne replied.

Of all the choreographers present, Charles Moulton had the most experience with videotaped dance, having performed in *Fractured Variations* and *Visual Shuffle*, directed by Sanborn and Perillo, and *Nine Persons Precision Ball Passing*, directed by Skip Blumberg. Paired with Blumberg for the lab, Moulton, who shares Blumberg's fascination with games, had the chance to both choreograph and direct a project, a first for him. Blumberg chose to develop a piece revolving around giant bubbles with a maximum lifespan of oddities as Eskimo Olympics, elephant races, and double Dutch jump-rope contests, Blumberg found the Sundance experience to be greatly rewarding, with "everyone sharing ideas and talking about dance and video all day long." For Elisa Monte and David Brown, who'd had limited exposure to video, the editing process became an obsession. Only three BVU150 editing machines, donated by Sony, were available, which kept the editing to the basics and eliminated the temptation to treat images with elaborate effects. Brown became convinced that dancers should appreciate editing just as actors must understand the mechanics of stagecraft.

The Sundance dance/film/video lab helped the artists to sense their own progress and to view their work from a historical context, facilitated by nightly screenings representing the work of participants. Opportunities, both creating them and taking advantage of them, can be problematic. Rarely do opportunities come without obligations and pressure, whether real or self-imposed. This year Sundance chose to concentrate on modern dance, rather than ballet, musical theater, or commercial jazz. Next year the Institute may invite more choreographers to observe during the June lab, as was *Vienna Lusthaus* director Martha Clarke this past summer. Perhaps the dance/film/video lab needs the same kind of long-term development as the yearly June lab, in which the chosen scripts are analyzed and rewritten over a nine-month period. Now that dancers and media artists are beginning to exchange roles there will be a search for a balance of power and a realization of what steps of preparation need to be added. Only once the artists in both camps are satisfied and faithful to their personal sets of aesthetics will dance/film/video take off with a force of its own. The recognition by Sundance should accelerate that process.

Deirdre Towers is a staff writer for Dance Magazine.

Laying Down the Law for Dramatic Films



On the beach at Coney Island, Agatha (Sheila Dabney) and Jo (Lois Weaver) confront a turbulent period in their relationship and professional lives, in Sheila McLaughlin's new feature, *She Must Be Seeing Things*. McLaughlin wrote, produced, and directed the film, using locations in New York City. Funding for the project included grants from the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Jerome Foundation, and the Massachusetts Council on the Arts, as well as support from ZDF, West German television. Improvisational musician John Zorn wrote the original score.

Courtesy filmmaker

Paula Schaap

[Author's note: This article is presented only for the purpose of educating the independent producer and is not to be taken as legal advice. The independent film or videomaker should, therefore, always consult an attorney before undertaking any course that may have legal ramifications.]

LAUNCHING A SUCCESSFUL INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM PRODUCTION is not unlike writing a well-made script. The protagonist—the filmmaker—sets out with all good intentions to make the next *Down by Law* or *Working Girls* only to be met by obstacle after obstacle. The biggest obstacle is, of course, raising money. Since the paperwork that accompanies incorporation, whether profit or not-for-profit, and limited partnerships involves a fair amount of legalese, most filmmakers consult a lawyer at this point. Once the money is safely in the bank account, however, the normal reaction is to turn to more interesting business or artistic matters and to stop calling the lawyer—whose clock starts to tick every time you say, "How's the law biz?".

There are, however, a number of legal issues that may arise during the course of production. This article will explore some of these issues with the objective of alerting filmmakers to potential legal problems and possible solutions.

PERSONNEL CONTRACTS

Cast and crew are assembled. If you are working with union people, you are a signatory to their contracts by virtue of hiring union members. The provisions in the contracts concerning overtime pay, turn-around times, meals, and so forth will affect your production schedule as well as your budget, so it's important to be thoroughly acquainted with all contract provisions. Chances are, if you are working on a tight budget, you are working nonunion. The Screen Actors Guild and the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees presently have contracts geared to low-budget films—in SAG's case, there is also a contract for very low-budget films called the Independent Producer's Limited Exhibition Letter of Agreement—and the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians has a proposed contract in the works. However, for the lowest-budget film even these contracts may be prohibitive.

Even if the cast and crew are not covered by union contracts, there should be a contract between each person and the production company. The contract can be as simple as a deal memo, which should state, at the least, the person's position, his or her rate of pay, the amount to be paid in deferments, if any, and when such deferments will be paid, the estimated starting date for the person, and the estimated time he or she is expected to work on the film. The memo should also state that it is understood that the person is working as an independent contractor and is not an agent, employee, or representative of the production company. Provisions may also be made for the person's credit, although the filmmaker should try to leave some flexibility in case the credit has to be shared or altered.

While the filmmaker drafts the crew and cast memos, his or her own contract should not be overlooked. The producer and director need their respective obligations, compensation, and credits defined, just as does any other member of the company. This is particularly true when, as is often the case, the producer and director have a financial stake in the film. Unless the



Director-writer Raoul Peck (foreground) and cinematographer Michael Chin get ready to shoot a take from *Haitian Corner*, a feature coproduction of Film News Now Foundation in New York and Berlin's Journal Film. Originally commissioned by ZDF-West Germany, the film was shot for less than $150,000, and completed with funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

Photo: Herbert Peck

funds are coming straight from the filmmaker's pocket, there will be investors to answer to. Investors are entitled to know the amount that is being spent on production fees and salaries to the producer and director.

Location Contracts

Location contracts are critical because no matter how many times the property owner assures you that he "loves the movies," the first time a film crew stampedes through his house, that "old junkyard lamp" will become a Tiffany original. Rule Number One: Try to have the location owner some distance from the location while you are shooting, preferably China (unless you're shooting there). Rule Number Two: Have a location contract. Salient provisions should include the dates, time of shooting, and a description of the location. There should be a release for the use of the location's image in the film, for advertising purposes, and for all ancillary media uses. If possible, there should be a provision that allows the filmmaker to return for reshooting at some future date at a fee that has already been agreed upon.

One of the most important points about location contracts may seem so obvious as to appear self-evident, but it's not: The person signing the contract must be the person who has legal control over the property. As an example, if you are shooting in an apartment, you need the tenant's permission. But what about the landlord's permission? And, if it is a co-operative apartment, does the board of the coop have to approve your use of the apartment? Common sense should prevail. If you are shooting a two character scene with a 16mm camera fixed on a tripod using available light, chances are no one except the tenant will know or care. If, on the other hand, you are training the light from a 5K HMI against the building, using a crane, and tying into the building's power supply, you should be prepared to get everyone in any position of ownership to sign a location contract. For a tenant-run cooperative, you may need to give the board time to get approval from the tenants. In addition, you should remember that even if the tenant is happy to have you use his or her apartment, technically they may be violating the terms of their lease. Most residential leases provide that the apartment is to be used for residence only. Again, a shoot that is low-keyed and nonintrusive will probably be tolerated; more ambitious or possibly more disruptive productions, however, should get permission.

For ownership of outdoor locations, it may be necessary to check the deeds filed in the local courthouse or town hall. Local residents may be helpful, but if in doubt, check. People in the neighborhood might still refer to the location as "Mr. Deed's homestead," when, in fact, that picturesque barn and corral is now owned by a multinational corporation. (Remember the scene in *Chinatown* when Jack Nicholson discovers that the farms in the Valley are being bought in the names of dead people?)

If you are leasing a studio, they will usually have a form for you to sign. Generally, the form will try to shift any possible liability onto your production. One way to avoid being charged for damage not caused by your production is to inspect the premises before shooting commences and to note in the contract any damage that pre-exists your shoot. It is also important that security provisions be spelled out in the contract.

Contracts in General

A word about oral contracts: don't. Except, of course, that everyone does. Just be aware that when you shake a person's hand and give them some form of assent to an agreement, your assent may be just as binding as the 10-page



notarized and witnessed contract that comes curling out of your lawyer's word processor. Proving the contract's existence and terms may be more difficult if it is oral, but that doesn't mean that it is not enforceable.

The most difficult situation a filmmaker can face is being threatened with noncompliance by a supplier or a cast or crew member in the middle of production. Contract problems on a film set are complicated by the fact that many film jobs involve creative services. Since creativity cannot be judged by precise specifications, your assessment of whether someone has fulfilled their contract promises and the other side's assessment may be very different. But let's say you have an art director who has not finished the set in time for the scheduled shooting date. Or a location owner who has, at the last moment, refused to let your crew onto the location. Or an actor who doesn't show up for scheduled and contracted for rehearsals. The key word for contract problems during production is negotiation. The main point is to get the film done, if possible, saving the harsh words and recriminations for later. This does not mean, however, that, when faced with a recalcitrant person and few other options, the filmmaker should not consider all legal avenues, including going to court. Be aware, however, that while you can get a money award for the damages caused by someone's refusal to perform, courts will not order someone to work for you. In the case of suppliers or a location, however, the court can order that the defaulting party perform according to the contract provisions.

A lawsuit should be a last-ditch effort. For one thing, it's expensive. For another, productions have strict time schedules, and litigation takes time. That is why it is critical that, if you are dissatisfied with supplies delivered or someone's performance, you speak to the person as soon as the difficulty arises, and, in the case of a business supplier or contractor, you put your complaint in writing. It is not uncommon for problems to arise because there has been a simple misunderstanding which, when caught early on, can be handled with a minimum of friction.

If you are asked to renegotiate a contract in the middle of production, examine the other side's claim with as much objectivity as possible. It may be that their role has changed, or that they have taken on more work than was originally expected, or that there was something omitted from the initial contract that, in all fairness, should be added. Although you have a binding contract, there is no reason to continue working with an unhappy associate if their requests are reasonable.

Acts of God clauses should be included in any contract where you are bound to pay money for a location or someone's services during a particular time period. Traditionally, these clauses were used to protect the contracting parties from events that were beyond their control, such as fire, flood, pestilence, war, and other natural or man-made disasters. Given the uncertainties of independent filmmaking, the filmmaker should avoid being bound to specific time periods. However, if it is necessary to make such a commitment in addition to the Acts of God clause, the filmmaker should include a clause giving him or her the right to reschedule or cancel with as little financial penalty as possible.

"Pay or play" clauses should not be a part of any low-budget production, but they are not uncommon in larger budget films. Pay or play provisions are generally used to attract stars to a production. What these clauses do is commit the filmmaker to paying a salary to a crew or cast member whether or not the production begins.

Permits for Public Property

While the Constitution protects the individual's rights to peaceably assemble, the same right does not automatically apply to filmmakers. Basically, New York or Los Angeles do not want an unannounced car chase down Broadway or Sunset Boulevard during rush hour. Nor does Wichita, Portland, or Atlanta, for that matter. What these localities want is a regulated, security-minded production that has the proper permits and insurance coverage. Therefore, to film your version of the *French Connection*, you will need a permit and the cooperation of the local peace-keeping forces.

Large cities and most states have offices for film and television production. These offices provide many services for filmmakers, including issuing permits for filming on public property. If you are shooting in an area that does not have a local film office, you should contact the local authorities,

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Steve Burns

Coproducer, Heat and Sunlight

When Steve Burns talks about legal contracts, he talks about how to avoid using them. "We work in direct-action video, using two cameras and 360 degree lighting. Actors do a lot of improvising in rehearsal, but they are rehearsing the character's relationships, rather than the scene itself." Because of this unique way of working, Burns notes that there has to be a very close working relationship between the director, the crew, and the actors.

Steve Burns and his coproducer, Hildy Burns, began working with Rob Nilsson, the director of *Heat and Sunlight*, a film made using this "direct-action" video method, when Nilsson lost his office space and moved into the Burns' office. Their method of working, according to Burns, "takes a long time and we have to raise the money and produce at the same time. We can sculpt the movie as we go along, but the downside is that it is like producing several films."



Don Bejema (as Mitch) with actor-director Rob Nilsson (as Hurley) in *Heat and Sunlight*, produced by Steve and Hildy Burns.

Courtesy filmmaker

Cast and crew generally worked on deferments and were given equity in the film. Their investors were aware of and supported their process. "If you can create a situation where everyone is friends and on the same team, it makes the job much easier." Burns found the San Francisco office of SAG very helpful. They were given a SAG experimental feature contract (now superceded by the "Limited Exhibition Agreement"), which made it possible for them to work on a low budget. Locations were donated by friends. They used a standard location release form, but they also found that "people were delighted because we painted, fixed it up, and usually left it in better condition than when we got there."

Robert Boyar

Insurance Broker

Robert Boyar's father was a theatrical manager and he advised his son to stay out of the theater. Acting on parental wisdom, Boyar went into insurance. He couldn't stay away from the footlights altogether; since many of his friends worked in theater, his insurance clients tended to be theater people. When he first got into the business, Boyar said, entertainment insurance in New York was geared only for theater. Gradually that began to change, and now, a number of big firms, including Boyar's parent corporation, Marsh and McLennan, Inc., offer film insurance.

"The fascinating thing about this business, as opposed to regular insurance, is that there is always an end, when the film is finished, so the work is always varied," says Boyar. Brokers such as Boyar specialize in arranging packages for film productions. Each one is different, to suit the needs and size of the production. Boyar stressed the need for a primary liability policy. He also stated that a feature film production should have an umbrella policy that comes into play when the primary policy is exhausted. For small productions, he noted that it may be more difficult to get insurance because brokers deal in packages, rather than in individual policies.

Patricia Scott

Director of the New York City Mayor's Office for Film, Theatre and Broadcasting

The New York City office is the oldest film commission in the country, according to Patricia Scott, its director. "We have the ability to issue permits for the five boroughs," she says. The services of the Mayor's Office are free. "Our understanding is that production needs require unique cooperation from the city." Permits and location services are furnished across the board, and the use of the office's services does not depend upon the size of the production. The only absolute requirement is that the production company show proof of insurance; a $1-million general liability policy is the minimum.

Scott suggested that filmmakers consult with the Mayor's Office as early in preproduction as possible. She noted that there is terrific competition for the streets. A filmmaker may have scheduled shooting days for a street at the same time a repair is being made there or a parade is being held. The Mayor's Office can help the filmmaker avoid such conflicts and even suggest other locations if the original location turns out to be unusable. Public safety and safety on the set are worked out in conjunction with the city's Police and Fire Departments. Generally the attitude of the office is to expedite and facilitate production. "Of course, we're not going to stop traffic on a main thoroughfare during rush hour to blow something up, but we will work with the filmmaker to find a suitable location."

particularly the police, as well as the state film office. Proof of insurance coverage is generally required before a permit for filming will be issued. Sometimes fees are exacted for these services, other times they are provided free of charge.

INSURANCE

Insurance is one of the absolute necessities of production. The basic necessity is a general liability and property damage policy. The lowest amount that will be underwritten is usually $1-million, and it is well worth the cost. As noted, municipalities will require a filmmaker to show proof of coverage before issuing a permit, as will most location owners.

There are other forms of insurance that are tailor-made for the film industry. Errors and omissions insurance is one example of this kind of insurance. These policies protect the filmmaker from suits that arise out of rights clearance issues, such as a claim that a script was plagiarized as well as suits for invasion of privacy, slander, and other types of damage to personal rights. The alternative to errors and omissions policies is to be a stickler about clearing all rights to materials used in a film.

Although not technically a form of insurance, completion bonds guarantee that a film will be made. These bonds are issued by companies that specialize in this area, and the company furnishing the bond will examine the budget and script to determine if the project is financially practical. During production they monitor work to make sure that that the film is proceeding on schedule and within budget. The premium for a completion bond is figured as a percentage of the budget, usually around six percent. If a completion bond is acquired, one requirement is that the budget have a contingency built in of 10 percent of the overall budget; the six percent is then figured on the budget plus the 10 percent contingency. The biggest drawback to a completion bond is that the entity furnishing the bond has the absolute right to step in and finish the production if it deems it to be in trouble. Although it may be reassuring to your investors that they will see a finished film—no matter what—completion bonds are usually not issued unless the company feels that the project has a sound footing. For the first-time filmmaker working on a small budget, therefore, completion bonds are usually not available, or even advisable.

Other types of insurance include negative insurance, costume and set insurance, and cast insurance. Generally, insurance is sold as a package by brokers who are experienced in film production.

SAFETY

Insurance is one form of protection. Safety precautions strictly enforced are another. We work in a business that is renowned for its risk-takers and macho men and women. It may be great to plan some amazing special effects in your storyboards, but facing a hefty personal injury suit is quite another matter. Not to mention that someone may be injured or, worse, killed due to your negligence. It is, therefore, important that you work with qualified people and that you make safety a watch-word on your set. In addition, it is important to remember that no matter how qualified the people you are working with might be, as producer or director you may still be held responsible for the actions of your associates.

The suit against John Landis for involuntary manslaughter was followed closely by the industry because it was the first time that criminal charges were brought against a director for injuries that are usually redressed in civil suits. One of the issues in that case was whether Landis was responsible for the acts of his experts. Landis was acquitted, but this does not preclude the injured parties from bringing civil suits against the principals in the film.

Reasonable people may disagree over how much responsibility a director or producer has for the acts of people who are qualified in their specialities that result in injury to people or property, but when lawyers go to court, they sue everyone who has any relationship to the injury at issue. The reason is that, at the onset of the suit, the lawyers don't know who is responsible, or, even more important, who has the money to pay for the injury.

Insurance is, of course, the frontline protection against liability, but even insurance has its limits. Insurance policies have dollar limits and there may be exceptions for grossly negligent acts or intentional acts that result in injury to people or property. If the insurance policy covers the injury, the insurance company generally has an obligation to supply counsel.



Ken Nakagawa, playing the lovelorn prince of J-Town, gets a lesson on love, marriage, and rock 'n' roll from Lana (Kate Connell) in *Living On Tokyo Time*. The feature, which was produced by writer-director Steven Okazaki on a shoestring budget, earned a theatrical release this past year.

Courtesy filmmaker

THE FINAL WORD

This article highlights some of the more common legal issues that arise during motion picture production. Many of these issues can be resolved by the parties without legal counsel. The best way to deal with your associates when it comes to legal agreements is to keep those agreements short, simple, and written so that anyone can understand the terms. (As Groucho said, "This is so simple even a six-year-old child could understand it. Run out and find me a six-year-old child. I can't make heads or tails of it.")

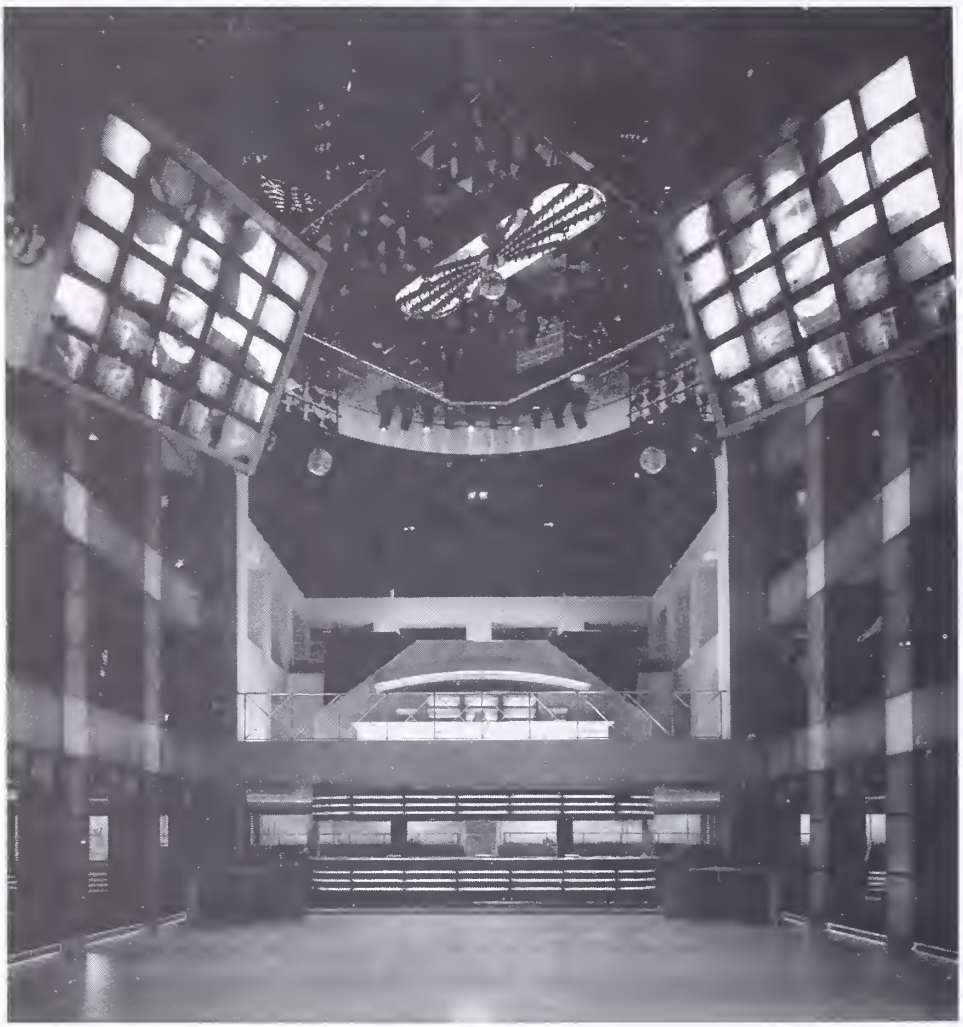
Lawyer's services can be used sparingly, but there are some circumstances where they should be used, if at all possible. For example, if you do not understand a document, you should have a lawyer go over it. If someone makes it a condition of your dealings with them that you do not seek legal advice, don't deal with them. A good business-person should want the other party to enter into a deal with full knowledge of his or her rights and obligations. Otherwise, the other side may later claim that there was a misunderstanding, or worse, fraud. If you are sued, the complaint must be brought to your lawyer and/or the insurance company immediately. You only have a certain amount of time to respond to legal papers, and the time is probably less than you realize.

Finally, lawyers are often excellent negotiators. They are particularly useful when business dealings have resulted in bad feelings between the parties. You may not be able to be objective about the assistant director who, when asked about your abilities as a director after you turned down a request for more money, responded with the classical put-down: "All sound and fury, signifiying nothing." Your lawyer, however does not have an ego engaged; she or he just wants to serve your interest in completing the film within schedule and within budget. Production is a time fraught with frustrations and problems waiting to be solved. Careful pre-planning and attention to those legal situations that can be covered ahead of time will help smooth the way to a finished film.

Paula Schaap is an attorney and graduate film student at Columbia University.

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"VIDEO ART," ITS AUDIENCE, ITS PUBLIC



Courtesy the Palladium

Martha Rosler

• I •

"Video art," in the United States at least, is now facing two audiences—the art audience, of course, and increasingly, a wider audience that has learned the word "video" from stores offering Hollywood movies on VCR cassettes and from MTV, or music television. For the wider audience, there is now a concrete equivalent of the word "videotape." For videomakers with little chance of direct access to television-viewing publics (which, despite dreams and wishes, includes most "video artists"), the existence of a market for these concrete entities has opened the possibility of actually "reaching the home audience"—not only via cable broadcasts,[1] which are not widely seen, but through rental or sales.

If, for simplicity's sake, we define art and mass-culture operationally, by their audiences, then "video art" stands at something of a crossroads between them. It also stands at another kind of crossroads, between its past and its future, for its new audience, if it materializes, would have inevitable effects upon its form and substance. So much is fairly obvious. I have written elsewhere[2] about the effects on video of its acceptance by the museum—by curators if not by the broadest museum audiences.

For the past few years video artists have shown their work in clubs also, reinforcing video art's existence outside museums, if mostly as good-time entertainment or wallpaper and suggesting as well a link to music television. The club audience is of course a younger and more hip audience than the general TV audience, but the existence of a rock-video audience seems already to have stimulated a fair number of video artists to adopt the strategies of rock-video, sometimes in the hopes of finding an entry into MTV—and sometimes they do, influencing its strategies in turn. Another less significant but still tangible effect of the rock-video audience and its acknowledgment by the television industry through the rapid proliferation of shows called some variant of "hot videos" has been the change in what it is that video artists are known to produce: Formerly, videomakers made "videotapes"; now we make "videos."

If video art actually reaches a more general audience, the concerns of video artists must change to meet it, and that change will carry all the

consequences of the loss of unassimilated marginality. I happen to value the paradoxical power of that marginality—as do all the art apparatuses and mass-culture industries, which rely on contributions from the margins to invigorate the mainstream or redirect it entirely. We must be clear, though, that this is a stylistic interest above all. Video art is seen within the television (and movie) industry as a form of research-and-development—of which music television is the best proof. That means that the strategies of artists' video are becoming more familiar to mass audiences, and familiarity breeds, if not contempt exactly, then a diminished ability to interrupt mass mythologies. The willingness of mainstream channels (even if only those affiliated with the Public Broadcasting Service) to feature shows orchestrated by Nam June Paik or "hosted" by Laurie Anderson (*Alive from Off-Center*) is matched by the tameness of these offerings (even mainstream television critics have remarked on the docility of the latter). In contrast, a certain criticality often marks cultural production outside the mainstream—even if that criticality is only inferential, intuited from the absence of taken-for-granted assumptions and understandings of familiar narrative strategies and other furniture. (It is safe to say that anything that "stands outside" is perceived as inconsequential, peculiar, or threatening—possibly all three—unless it takes care to ingratiate itself. The special effects structured into most videotapes presented in the mainstream don't qualify because they are all too recognizable as...special effects.)

Still, I see no point—at present, anyway—in shying away from either museum audiences or home video markets (or broadcast television—perhaps). But to rush ahead blindly is, I think, unwise. It is hasty to assume that reaching a larger audience, having more viewers, equals the power to achieve certain wished-for effects (assuming one is not simply pursuing fortune and fame). There is simply no question, for example, of specific political criticism located outside the accepted spectrum getting much of an airing. This is so even if it is couched within recognizable narrative structures. In the United States, for example, nothing remotely favorable to Nicaragua's present political organization can appear in the mainstream media (except perhaps on PBS, and not necessarily there) without being eclipsed by disclaimers. In fact, I suspect that the time has passed when any kind of truthful account might be offered about Nicaragua in such arenas. Similarly, no work—narrative, dramatic, or any other kind—that presents, say, socialist ideas or secure lesbian couples or that suggests a positive view of easily available abortion will appear. These matters have to be given a "problem" focus. Again, it's closer to the truth to say that such subjects simply don't appear. (I wonder what the fortunes of reactionary "political art" would be; we don't seem to have visible examples of it in video yet.)

Art usually gets away with serious political comment in mass-culture, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, in most museums only by being global or oblique (or comic—but that opens an avenue of discussion I don't intend to enter here, except to acknowledge comedy's extraordinary ability to get past instititutional and personal censors). Political observation on a relatively abstract level, a plane of comment that avoids concrete particulars, offers little threat to most people's preconceptions. As I've previously remarked,[3] these works appear to art- and theory-educated audiences as theoretical or critical but to others as merely cryptic or "poetic"—a predictable split, one is inclined to say, between art-audience and mass-audience works. The point is that mass-audience works by and large must forgo challenges to reigning ideas, particularly political ones.

Even the opening of the home market, however, isn't going to make video art the darling of *Dynasty*'s audience, and the strictures that apply to mainstream-generated mass-audience works would presumably be relaxed for independently produced work. Furthermore, although it is the marketing structure for movies-on-video that has prepared the way, a home market must surely be developing for video art not made in the image of TV.[4]

• II •

So far I may be taken as suggesting that artists are free to shun mass-culture influences or strategies or are likely to avoid them. This is clearly incorrect. The art system's social meaning and social standing as a form-of-production-apart—as modernist production—are, in fact, evaporating before our eyes, and its venues are being tranformed into sites of mass-culture, its supposedly adversarial opposite. It is not, as I've said, that artists have escaped mass-culture—does any one any longer need to be convinced that art and mass-culture are mutually dependent? But the current perceived crisis of art depends on the apparent swamping of the relative social prestige and significance of elite culture by mass-culture, with its accent on present (material) pleasures, with the consequent loss of belief in the more traditional modernist preoccupation with critical consciousness or spiritual transcendence. Along with these have gone any sense of security with a specialized audience (*audience* as opposed, perhaps, to *market*).

High-culture is increasingly interpreted in the light of mass-cultural understandings and forms of address. In sounding this note I'm not expressing a longing for the good old days of elite culture—far from it. My intention is simply to outline some of the changes that accompany the decline of modernity. In political life as in cultural pursuits, the conversion of substance into style has been long in the making and widely remarked on. (Such attention has done nothing to arrest that movement, of course.) No one, surely, is surprised to hear politics referred to as theater, meaning not that political power is a sham but that political discussion has been replaced by public relations—image management. The patrician style that has returned to Washington, replacing the populist emphasis that peaked in the late 1970s, has done so as the Hollywood version, concocted of dollar signs, the finesse of surgeons both cosmetic and internal, and a touted skill at interpreting opinion-poll-driven scripts. The audience for this theater is the mass audience, the one that beckons to video artists (and perhaps to most other artists as well).

Currently one of my favorite quotations about the relation between art and the mass media comes from the late sociologist Alvin Gouldner, in his book *The Dialectic of Ideology and Technology*.[5] Although not addressing the subject directly, it suggests that video artists' current craze for high-tech production is partly a matter of production envy:

> Both the cultural apparatus and the consciousness industry parallel the schismatic character of the modern consciousness: its highly unstable mixture of cultural pessimism and technological optimism. The cultural apparatus is more likely to be the bearer of the "bad news" concerning—for example—ecological crisis, political corruption, class bias; while the consciousness industry becomes the purveyors of hope, the professional lookers-on-the-bright-side. The very political impotence and isolation of the cadres of the cultural apparatus grounds their pessimism in their own everyday life, while the technicians of the consciousness industry are surrounded by and have the use of the most powerful, advanced, and expensive communications hardware, which is the everyday grounding of their own technological optimism.
>
> Cultural apparatus and consciousness industry thus each define the world quite differently and are, as a result, in a tense if somewhat one-sided relation with one another; one-sided in that the former worries more about the latter than the reverse. Clearly, the largest section of the populace in advanced industrial societies is now under the direct and immediate influence of the consciousness industry, while the cultural apparatus has little if any direct contact with this great public.

To offer an example from another side: Russell Jacoby has described in his books and articles the professionalization and, in this case, medicalization, of Freudian psychoanalysis and its consequent disappearance from the common understandings of a literate public. He remarks in *The Repression of Psychoanalysis*[6] that Freud, rather than being awarded a Nobel Prize in medicine, was awarded the Goethe Medal. Jacoby comments:

> Freud wrote elegantly for a cultured public.... In acknowledgment of the cultural breadth of this work, Freud's students invited Thomas Mann to deliver a key address upon Freud's eightieth birthday. These honors reflect Freud's intellectual milieu, a literate and heterogeneous community.... As psychology transformed itself into a private club open only to medical doctors, its language and substance unavoidably shifted. Exclusively engaged with clinical practice, the doctors ignored the cultural and political implications of analysis.

The literate arena in which psychoanalysis formerly participated is the same one that formerly contained the public for high art. And as psycho-



Courtesy New Video

analysis has become a "specialty," so have the high arts; the modernist high arts (at least) had by the postwar period technicalized themselves. But in the 1980s, despite or alongside of a high degree of professionalization, art has returned to a market-driven commodity (and celebrity) orientation. Mass media-style trivialization and professionalization have both been operative forces—as cause and symptom—in the fading away of the shared understandings necessary for an informed and nuanced range of viewer responses—for the formation of publics.

Museums center their schedules now on blockbuster art shows, the face the art world shows its largest audience. In these shows the message is not a sermon of individual spiritual cultivation or an *Ozymandias*-like caveat about the remains of vanished civilizations. The awe upon attending them is not intended to be moral—it is *supposed* to be occasioned by the control of time, space, and precious resources, an awe of simple accumulation, like Scrooge McDuck in the money vaults. If this sounds like the mind set of imperialism, what else could it possibly be? (This identification with successful greed is not new to the exhibition-going public in empire states, of course, but the pious swaddling has fallen away.)

It is inconclusive at best to remark that museums are more and more like shopping malls and apartment-house lobbies, for these spaces are as public or as private as any other transitional spaces through which people must pass. Inside the museum, the momentary impressions received in the few seconds of regard budgeted for each static work are often accompanied or prompted by the spoken commentary of a private audio tour that returns the work to the familiar envelope of everyday mediations, with few terms that are not familiar—provided, of course, that you've had the appropriate upbringing. This audio-tour gambit doesn't seem feasible in relation to video, which usually speaks for itself, so video must provide its own tour, its own bridge to the everyday. Whether video does so by leaning toward mass-cultural forms like film, television, or music television or toward high-cultural forms like painting or dance, it still does so with the means of broadcast television, the means of mass-culture.

This compares with the situation of independent film, earlier in the century, for it too was built with the technical means of a thoroughly mass-cultural art. But film was a form that, no matter how apparently personal its address, was played out in a very public space, a "palace" or temple to which its audience must go in order to partake of its delights. Television, of course, is the centerpiece of "the home." The film industry led the way in the privileging of fantasy in public life, but the television era represents a cultural stage far more advanced in that respect. Social preoccupations have swung far from those of the 1960s, and we are experiencing a powerful surge of reprivatization, but in different terms from earlier periods stressing the primacy of "private life." What the postmodern era represents, if nothing else, is the blurring of the distinction between public and private. (That pertains as much to the change of style in Washington and in psychoanalytic circles, to return to my two other examples, as it does here.) The rigid boundaries of this distinction have always been more a matter of the mass mythologies I spoke of earlier, for the public sphere and the private sphere form an interdependent whole. But television, the most public of forms, now is staged within what seems the most private of spaces, the family home or someone's room.

• III •

An ominous consequence of this blurring of public and private has been the fading of the distinction between the concept of THE PUBLIC and that of THE AUDIENCE, terms that I have so far failed to distinguish. Here it might be interesting for you to take the time to say what the difference is between the two—if you think there is one:

I don't want to prejudice your answer too much, nor do I want to give you my answer too fully here. Let me just define "audience" roughly as "consumers of spectacles." I'll define "public" as the space of collective (political-social) decision-making, without specifying by whom the agenda is set. To suggest what I think are the parameters of the issue, I offer the following set of questions:[7]

• How can there be said to be a public sphere when only those of my students who are over age 40 *ever* enunciate a difference, when asked, between these concepts of audience and of public? In general, everyone else sees the audience as a self-chosen subset of a more amorphous entity called "the public"—for which they express a good deal of contempt. In other words, the dimension activity-passivity is attached only to the concept "audience," which has the distinction of willed spectatorship rather than residence in the limbo of nonchoice. And since choice among presented alternatives is how, in our society, freedom is defined, I guess that members of the audience are perceived as free while members of the public are not.

• If public sphere and private sphere exist only in a relationship of complementarity, how can there be said to be a private sphere when no one remembers that in the past, family members were expected to show at least an outward unity of purpose?

• How can there be said to be a public sphere when news is entertainment and history is recounted in terms of the lives of performers and dates of hit shows?

• How can there be said to be a private sphere when millions are told simultaneously to insert suppositories to gain hemorrhoid relief—and how can there be said to be a public sphere when most of the audience is apparently unconcerned with this simultaneity of address, and even with whether the message applies to them?

• How can there be said to be a public sphere when schematic diagrams of the recent operation on President Reagan's penis and lower intestine appear prominently in the mass media? And how can there be said to be a

public sphere when the concept of privacy violated by these examples has long since been erased by everyone's supposed longing to appear on TV and thus be inscribed in history?

• How can there be said to be a public sphere when the rules of civil behavior—personal, moral, and legal—are suspended for celebrities? Concomitantly, how can there be said to be a public sphere when it has become impossible to challenge or criticize representatives of the State except in the most restricted terms and circumscribed by a foolish politeness?

• How can there be said to be a private sphere, how can there be said to be a public sphere, when the image of the terrorist, the grisly specter of death of the private and public alike, is put beside me at the family dinner table?

• IV •

Rather than offer any answers, I'd like to redirect attention to the contents of "the private"—the sphere of daily life—and its relation to mass media by appending a quotation from the German filmmaker Alexander Kluge, from "On Film and the Public Sphere."[8]

The Media Are Standing on Their Head

One speaks of "film producers," of "film-auteurs." Accordingly, television, video corporations, the radio and the cinema consider themselves to be the media. In fact they are merely the forms and conditions under which the media exist. The true medium of experience, of desires, of phantasies, and actually of aesthetic appreciation as well, are the real human beings and never the specialists. People work at steady jobs, they toil away, which in turn means they work on their relationships, they work overtime in order to survive in both work and private relationships. This is the labor of inner balance, the work of a lifetime. Life is made up of these three powerful elements, the stuff of centuries with all its misery and errors. It is thus the horizons of perception and the medium of social experience are actually produced. The so-called media feed on the returns of this labor. They only reflect something which depends on being filled out by the spectators from their own experience. There is not a single Mark or dollar that the media cash in at the box office, through rental or taxes, which is not earned by the spectator or nonspectator. Our responsibility is therefore to the nonspectator whom we deceive if we masquerade as the media. Both, that is, nonspectators and spectators together, constitute the media and produce its reception: i.e., it is their imagination that animates the screen.

Kluge is here pointing out that despite the self-representations of the mainstream mass media as the public imaginary and as the very sphere of "the public," more democratic than democratic institutions themselves, more real and more accurate and truthful than any other form of representation, it is people's minds and their experiences that animate the offerings of these mainstream media. If the public and private spheres are indeed collapsing, it seems all the more important to retain a toehold—particularly a consciously marginal one—in arenas that provide multiple audiences. The problem for videomakers is how to represent the actual contents of everyday life without reproducing the sleek trivialities and partial truths demanded by the art system and the mass media alike, without falling into banality or esotericism.



them. I'm interested to see what the outcome of these projects will be, though I admit my hopes for their representing a significant opening to a mass audience are low. The July 1987 issue of *Video Extra*, which subtitles itself "The Video Industry Newsmagazine," opened its cover story "Serving Special Interests on Video" by commenting, "Special interest video is the little engine that should—the product category that would someday explode into prominence, snaring a major share of the business and creating new media giants. Don't hold your breath...experts are predicting informational video's sales will show little, if any, increase in 1987...." That is informational video, shown in their mock pie chart as a small sliver of the home market. One can only imagine artists' video's likely share!

Furthermore, Renee Tajima, in discussing with me her research for an article on video distribution in the United States ["The Video Trade," *The Independent*, October and November 1987], has suggested that developing a market for videotapes in half-inch format may very well destroy the market for work in three-quarter-inch format. This is likely to cut into the income that videomakers can expect from their work—income that is already far less than filmmakers generate from their films. It will also lower the technical standards that audiences will expect, at least until high-resolution half-inch video is available.

5. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976, pp. 174-175.

6. Chicago: The University Press, 1986.

7. I first asked these questions earlier this year in New York, where I took part in a panel discussion entitled (truly!) "The Cultural Public Sphere—The Birth and Death of the Viewer: On the Public Function of Art," a discussion from which some other parts of my remarks here have been drawn.

8. In *Die Patriotin* (Frankfurt, 1979).

This article is a somewhat revised version of one published slightly earlier this year in the Australian magazine *Photofile*.

Martha Rosler is an artist and writer who makes videotapes. She teaches media at Rutgers University and elsewhere.

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NOTES

1. Cable television is, in fact, an important outlet for what is called "public access" programming in officialese, or simply "community programming." The fact remains, however, that most makers of video art are not much interested in these channels or their audiences.

2. In "Video: Shedding the Utopian Moment," in René Payant, ed., *Video* (Montréal, Artexte: 1986). Also published in *Block* (London), No. 11 (1985/1986).

3. In "Notes on Quotes," *Wedge* (New York), No. 2 (Fall 1982).

4. Some of my videotapes are scheduled to be included in two home-market series, one put together by a video art distributor in the United States and one by a Canadian distributor. I mention this not only to verify the existence of such projects, at least in the advanced planning stage, but also to suggest my own position in relation to

LABORS OF LOVE: THE FESTIVAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NON-PROFESSIONAL CINEMA



Csaba Csegöldi and Gyula Papp in *Madárijesztó (Scarecrow)*, Csaba Bollok's first prize winner in the youth competition at UNICA.

Courtesy filmmaker

Karen Rosenberg

Because the U.S. is not a member of the international association of amateur filmmakers, UNICA (Union Internationale du Cinema Non-Professionel), its yearly festival is hardly known here. "We're waiting for the Americans," president Josef Walterscheidt of West Germany told me. Why the U.S. never joined this organization remains obscure—probably we have lacked the dense network of film clubs that forms its backbone. (Each national UNICA organization is made up of affiliated cine-clubs and/or members-at-large.) UNICA was founded in Europe over 50 years ago, and although some Asian, African, and Latin American nations are members, it still retains a strong European flavor. For historical reasons, German seems to be the main language of communication in UNICA, and this was reinforced by the location of the 1987 festival in Graz, Austria. But it's possible to get along with just English, since many UNICA members speak that language well.

It's obvious which countries are and aren't UNICA members, because the main competition is arranged by country: each nation's prize-winning films and videos (often selected in a pyramid of local, regional, and national competitions) are shown together, and one prize goes to the best national program. (This year's winner was France.) Each national program begins with its national anthem—and there was much embarrassment when the Czechoslovak program was preceded by the Soviet national anthem. There is a ceremonial, diplomatic feel to UNICA, which is affiliated with UNESCO.

This doesn't mean the atmosphere is formal, for UNICA is a kind of international club, and some members have known each other for 30 years. Social events, such as banquets and excursions to Austrian tourist attractions, were included in the price of a festival ticket ($160, more or less, depending on the date of purchase, but free for those whose works are in competition). It's a long festival—nine days, from August 14 to 22—due in part to such outings. But there's also the happy fact that films aren't scheduled simultaneously and the international jury's deliberations and voting are a public event. Around 470 people received the festival ticket while another 100 to 150, mostly Austrians, just came to screenings, which were free and open to the public. At dinners and on trips one could chat with people whose day-time professions were clearly less exciting to them than their film or video plans and activities.

Unfortunately, amateur status doesn't guarantee liberation from commercial culture. UNICA is not the best place to view experimental film and video, although some was shown in the national programs and in the separate "UNICA-Avant-Garde" section. Too many entries in this year's festival imitated the clichés of TV and movies, with much less expensive means. The number of women filmed in garter belts and black hosiery was surely disproportionate to the general female population, and one longed for fresh fantasies and more imaginative fetishes. During one of the evening discussions that were held in the screening auditorium (with translation provided) only two women, Poli Marichal of Puerto Rico and Meri Viljamaa of Finland, objected to such gender stereotyping. Much of UNICA, it seems, has not yet had its consciousness raised.

Perhaps this is because UNICA clubs contain so many men of pre-feminist generations. At Graz, there were comparatively few men and women in their mid-twenties to early forties. One explanation offered was that child-rearing interferes with amateur filmmaking. But Björn Andreasson of Sweden told me that many young nonprofessionals prefer to work on their own; at 33, he's the baby in his UNICA club, and the next youngest member is almost 20 years his senior.



Slow Fox, by Michael Waltin of Sweden, a stylish film about the absurdity of modern life, was a favorite among younger viewers at UNICA, but was awarded no prize.

Courtesy filmmaker

Sweden, he said, has about 1,000 UNICA members and about one third of them work independently while the remainder are spread among some 40 clubs.

The few UNICA members in their twenties who attended the 1987 festival sought each other out and launched into animated discussions about film and video. Perhaps that's because, unlike their elders, they want to become professional directors. In fact, two of the most outstanding films of the festival were by 24-year-olds. One was *Schritte des Anderen* (*The Others' Steps*), by Andreas Dresen, a film student in Potsdam. Voted the best film of the festival by the jury, it demonstrates the director's sensitive eye for beauty: the three neighbors who are forced to spend a night in one apartment are all attractive characters, physically or spiritually. (The older woman in the film is played by Lotte Loebinger, a retired actress who worked with Brecht and Piscator, Dresen said.) Another highlight was *Madárijesztö* (*Scarecrow*), by Csaba Bollók of Hungary, which won first prize in a separate youth competition. It's a kind of *Waiting for Godot* about two kids in landlocked Hungary who are driving to the sea—in a car that doesn't move. The map they are using turns out to be of the United States (Bollók's playful response to Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger than Paradise*, Jack Kerouac, and the *On the Road* genre in general). Sad and witty, this film is a sign of a sophisticated intelligence. If UNICA prizes help such talented amateurs gain access to professional facilities, then this organization will have provided a great service.

It is rare to find a forum where westerners can view amateur films from the USSR and Eastern Europe. The UNICA offerings show artistic diversity within the "Eastern bloc," which suggests that this term might be dropped. The second-prize winner in the youth competition, *Saga Nashego Vremeni* (*A Tale of Our Time*), by Igor Vasilicv and Viesturs Grazhdanovich of Latvia, is the story of a young hero who loses his friends to status-seeking, drugs, or the religious life. Because it relies on striking imagery, it was much more successful at Graz than *Alulnézet* (*View from Below*), by György Kárpáti of Hungary, a video documentary in which a young male addict talks about how he obtains drugs. (Since the tape depends on verbal information, the French, Spanish, and English speakers in the audience weren't helped much by the German voiceover.) Perhaps *glasnost* has lessened the old worry about airing one's dirty linen in public. What one learns at a festival like this is that our linen is remarkably similar.

That video art is beginning to take hold in the U.S.S.R. was demonstrated by a bronze-medal winner, *Kuznetsy* (*Blacksmiths*), by Viktor Siylats of Estonia. In this delightfully simple work, a digitally-produced round (the tune is *Frère Jacques*) is paralleled on the visual level by multiplying the singer's image—Siylats himself. Siylats told me that, in 1986, he saw experimental videos from many countries in Hungary at a UNICA-sponsored event. Clearly, communication from West to East as well as from East to West is facilitated by this organization.

Such interchange would be enhanced if the Soviet Union and the nations of Eastern Europe allowed more contestants to attend next year's UNICA festival in Zagreb, Yugoslavia, and if a contingent of nonprofessionals from the U.S. were present. UNICA's Walterscheidt says he would be willing to discuss a U.S. guest program and invites interested film- and videomakers to contact him at: Am Ulrichshof 4, D-5000 Cologne 50, W. Germany.

Karen Rosenberg is a writer whose work has appeared in Sight and Sound, *the* Nation, *the* Boston Globe, *and elsewhere.*

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.





DOMESTIC

AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 23-28, New York. Now entering 30th yr as showcase for new 16mm & video releases in nontheatrical, cultural & educational markets. Sponsored by American Film & Video Assoc. (formerly Educational Film Library Assoc.), the fest, held at the Omni Park Central Hotel in NY, offers over 500 film & video entries chance to compete in 60 categories for Blue Ribbon & Red Ribbon Awards. Top Best of Festival Award qualifies a film for entry in Academy Awards doc category. Well-attended by media buyers from libraries, universities, media centers, museums, gov't agencies & other orgs. Along w/ competition, fest offers workshops, last yr focusing on video, funding, distrib., censorship & copyright; exhibition hall open to over 75 distribs & media orgs & special events, tributes (last yr, to Leo Dratfield); awards ceremony & special programs (last yr's incl. "Third World Perspectives," children's TV, role of women in developing nations & social & domestic issues). Entry fees range from $60 for experimental film & video to $150 for features. Contact: Ron MacIntyre, executive director, American Film & Video Association, 920 Barnsdale Rd., LaGrange Park, IL 60525; (312) 482-4000.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL, April, California. Cosponsored for 3rd yr by Visual Communications & UCLA Film & TV Archives, fest showcases dramatic, doc, experimental & animated films produced by & about Asian Pacific Americans on Asian Pacific culture, history & experiences. Entries not chosen for fest may be part of "Pioneering Visions," a local touring program visiting community & art centers in southern CA. Video fest is in planning stages. Format: 35mm, 16mm, super 8; preview on 3/4" (preferred), 1/2". No entry fee. Deadline: Jan. 30. Contact: Linda Mabalot, Visual Communications, 263 S. Los Angeles St., #307, Los Angeles, CA 90012; (213) 680-4462, or Claire Aguilar, UCLA Film & TV Archives; (213) 825-8263.

ASIFA-EAST ANIMATED FILM AWARDS, January, New York. Honors new developments in animation, sponsored by NY chapter of int'l society of animators, formed for the purpose of holding annual fest & has since grown to incl. several chapters & programs. Award cats incl. directing, animation, design, concept, sound & student. Format: 16mm, 3/4". Entry fees: $5 (amateur/student), $10 (nonsponsored), $30 (sponsored, to one minute), $40 (sponsored, over one minute). Work must have been completed after July 1, 1985. Deadline: Jan. 8. Contact: Dick Rauh, Optical House, 25 W. 45th St., New York, NY 10036; (212) 869-5840.

BACA/BROOKLYN ARTS COUNCIL FILM & VIDEO EXPOSITION, February, New York. 21st annual fest highlighting ind. noncommercial films & video, held in conjunction w/ Nat'l Academy of Arts & Sciences NY chapter. Approx. 50 works receive awards each yr & winning films & videos are screened at Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jefferson Market Library, BACA & Brooklyn Museum. Entries must be less than 60 mins. Cash prizes of $1 per min. (to maximum of $50) paid to filmmakers whose work is screened. Format: 16mm, 3/4"; 1/2" for preview. Entry fee: $10 for print or video; $15 for 3/4" or 1/2" copy of original. Deadline: Dec. 18. For info & appls, contact: Chuck Reichenthal, Brooklyn Arts Council, 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn, NY 11238; (718) 783-3077/4469.

BIG MUDDY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, February 1-7, Illinois. 10th yr of competition for ind. films & videos produced w/in last 2 yrs, organized & produced by students at Dept. of Cinema & Photography at S. Illinois Univ. Guest jurors, all filmmakers, also present work. $1,500 in prize money awarded in Best of Festival program; all genres & subjects accepted. Format: 16mm, 3/4" (video entries must have originated on video). Entry fees: $20-30. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Dane Thompson, Big Muddy Film Festival, Dept. of Cinema & Photography, Southern Illinois Univ., Carbondale, IL 62901; (618) 453-2365.

NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS, March, New York. New discoveries of int'l filmmaking talent are focus of search by this prestigious showcase's programmers from MoMA Film Dept & Film Society of Lincoln Center (which also sponsors NY Film Fest). 25-30 features, docs & shorts selected from several countries. Held at MoMA's Roy & Niuta Titus Theater, the program is well attended by critics, distributors & foreign buyers, and most shows sell out. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Jan. 4. Contact: Marian Masone, Film Society of Lincoln Center, 140 W. 65th St., New York, NY 10023; (212) 877-1800.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL GOLDEN GATE AWARDS COMPETITION, March 17-27, California. This competitive section of San Francisco Film Fest honors work in 4 divisions w/ 19 categories: shorts, docs, film & video animation; broadcast TV productions in commercial, noncommercial & cable production (incl. docs, entertainment & ind. work commissioned for TV); work directed &/or produced by Bay Area residents & experiments in form, incl. work made in abstract or personal vein. Awards incl. best of category, special jury & honorable mention. Last yr over 700 int'l entries received, w/ 3rd world cinema representing 1/3 of entries & several US & foreign films making their US premiere. This will be fest's 31st anniversary. Deadline: Dec. 10. Contact: Laura Thielen, Golden Gate Awards, San Francisco International Film Festival, 3501 California St., San Francisco, CA 94118; (415) 221-9055.

THIRD WAVE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, February 26-March 1, Texas. Regional showcase w/in fest spotlights work of women film & video artists who produce in or are from AR, KS, LA, MO, NM, OK; fest tours 5 cities & has Austin cablecast. Fest sponsored by Liatris Media, which promotes exhibition & distribution opportunities for women in media from diverse cultural & ethnic backgrounds. Work must have been completed after Jan. 1, 1980. Commercials, ads & industrials not eligible. Format: 16mm, 3/4". Entry fee: $10. Deadline: Jan. 8. Contact: Liatris Media, c/o Women & Their Work, 1501 W. 5th St., Suite E2, Austin, TX 78703; (512) 499-8090/479-6155.

FOREIGN

BERGAMO INTERNATIONAL WEEK OF AUTEUR FILMS, March 24-29, Italy. 31st annual edition of fest is open to feature or doc "auteur" films in both competitive & informative sections. This section incl. films in which screenplay is written by the director—individually or in collaboration w/ other authors—& in which director's "artistic personality emerges in such a way that his work shows unity of direction, style & inspiration." All films in competitive section must be premieres outside country of origin & must not have been shown at other int'l film fests. Awards incl. Grand Prize of 5,000,000 lire to be divided between director & producer & special prizes for best musical score, best actor & actress, best scenario & best first work. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Jan. 30. Contact: Nino Zucchelli, director, Mostra Internazionale del Film d'Autore, Rotonda dei Mille, 1, Bergamo, Italy; tel: 243 162; telex 300408 BERBAN I.

FESTIVAL DES FILLES DES VUES, April 7-10, Canada. Video Femmes, a women's production & distribution collective, will celebrate 11th yr of int'l fest w/ presentation of over 60 films & videos directed &/or produced by women. Entries may be on any subject & any length & features, docs, shorts, experimental & animated works accepted. Audience is primarily French-speaking. Several US films by women had Canadian premiere here. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entrant pays shipping costs. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Lisse Bonenfant, Festival des Filles des Vues, 56, rue St. Pierre, #203, Quebec City, G1K 4A1, Quebec, Canada; (418) 692-3090.

INSTITUTE OF AMATEUR CINEMATOGRAPHERS INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION, March, England. Considered the oldest amateur filmmaker's organization in the world, IAC has sponsored this competition since 1933. Accepts amateur, junior, youth & student works "made for love, w/ no financial reward & w/o professional assistance." Open class cat. incl. productions by ind. & semi-pro filmmakers & film students. Principal awards presented at London Int'l Amateur Film Festival in March. Format: 16mm, super 8, 8mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Entry fees: £3.50 plus £5 banking charge for payment not made in sterling. Incl. return postage. Deadline: Dec. 31. Contact: Competition Officer, IAC, Box 618, London W5 1SX, England.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF YOUNG CINEMA, March 1-6, Canada. Formerly Québec Int'l Super 8 Film & Video Festival, this competitive fest has expanded to incl. 16mm productions along w/ super 8 & video. Nonpro & amateur films & videos by young filmmakers highlighted & selected for originality & quality. Selection committee of 5 film professionals awards cash prizes & plaques in official int'l competitive section & intercollegiate section (for colleges in Québec only). Grand Prix awarded for each format; other top prize goes to film best utilizing one format. Films & videos must be under 30 mins, longer works must be approved by committee. Audiences number 3,500. Entry fee: $20 per cassette or reel, incl. return shipping. Format: 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Dec. 14, forms; Jan. 4, films & tapes. Contact: Jean Hamel, director, International Festival of Young Cinema, 4545 Pierre-de-Coubertin Ave., Box 1000, Station M, Montréal, Québec, Canada H1V 3R2; tel: (514) 252-3024; telex: 05-829647.

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL, June 10-24, Australia. Director Rod Webb travels 6 months every yr to world's film fests to select films for this noncompetitive fest, one of Australia's major film events, now in its 35th yr. Program mixes features, shorts, docs & retrospectives w/ healthy number of US ind. films. Several films shared w/ Melbourne Film Fest, held about the same time. Most of Australia's distribs & TV buyers attend fest, which also has enthusiastic & loyal audience. Incl. in fest is excellent opportunity for filmmakers to gain publicity in & access to Australian markets. Participating filmmakers provided w/ hotel, hospitality & intros to press & buyers. Rod Webb will be guest of FIVF in late Feb.-early Mar. '88 in order to prescreen & select US films. Entries must be Australian premieres com-

pleted in previous yr. Fest pays for roundtrip group shipment of selected films from FIVF's offices. All lengths, subjects, styles & genres considered. Format: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: $20, payable to FIVF. Deadline: Feb. 1. For info & appls, contact: Kathryn Bowser, Festival Bureau, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400. Fest address: Sydney Film Festival, Box 25, Glebe, NSW, Australia 2037; tel: 660-3844; telex: AA75111.

TAMPERE INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, March, Finland. Peace & social equality themes underlie selection of shorts (under 35 mins; docs may be up to 60 mins.) accepted for participation in fest, held in Finland's 2nd largest city & now in its 18th yr. Program consists of int'l competition encompassing over 70 films from 30 countries, nat'l competition for Finnish shorts, retrospectives & tributes. Categories are animated, doc & fiction/experimental. Int'l jury awards Grand Prize of bronze statue ("The Kiss") & 6000 FIM ($1,200); winners in other cats receive statuettes & 2000 FIM ($400). Films must have been completed after Jan. 1, 1987. Send transcript w/ entry. Fest pays return shipping. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Jan. 1. Contact: Pertti Paltila, director, Tampere International Film Festival, Box 305, SF-33101 Tampere, Finland; tel: 358 31 35681; telex 22448 tam sf.

VIENNALE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL. March, Austria. Over 60 feature & doc films from 23 countries shown to audiences of 12,000 at last yr's fest. Films chosen by director & committee of critics & collaborators on basis of artistic quality & content, w/ eye toward support of new & young directors & ind. producers. Fest is non-competitive, although last yr a 35-person jury awarded $15,000 worth of filmstock to winning Austrian director. Entries must be Austrian premieres. Several Austrian distribs attend. One fest feature is all-night, free youth screening from 1-6 a.m.; other features incl. retros & special symposia & programs on such themes as psychoanalysis in relation to film & theater; & jazz in film featuring black music from two worlds. Format: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 3/4", 1/2". Entrants responsible for shipping for preview; fest pays shipping for selected films. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Helmuth Dimko, director, Viennale, Urania Strasse 1, 1010 Vienna, Austria; tel: 753284; telex: 113985 filmf a.

ZAGREB WORLD FESTIVAL OF ANIMATED FILMS, May 30-June 3, Yugoslavia. Biennial recognition of best of world animation, which, along w/ Annecy & Varna, is major prestigious showcase for animated films & videos. This will be 8th edition; last yr films from 24 countries shown, w/ 58 in competition & 39 in info section. Awards in several cats, incl. shorts, educational, children, debut film, humor, sound effects, music, graphic art & discretionary jury awards. Life Achievement Award, recently created, will go to Chuck Jones this yr. Fest also features Animarket, a meeting place for filmmakers, producers, distributors & TV representatives; also organizes special events incl. round-table discussions & exhibits. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Charles Samu, fest's US rep, will arrange group shipment of films. For info & entry forms, contact him by December at: International Film Programs, 1318 Fulton St., Rahway, NJ 07065; (201) 382-9437. Fest deadline: Mar. 15. Fest address: Festival Organizing Committee of Zagreb 88, c/o Zagreb Film, Nova ves 18, 41000 Zagreb, Yugoslavia; tel: (041) 276 636.

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A young nun (Peggy Healey) breaks her vows when she acknowledges her attraction to her beautiful neighbor (Ela Troyano) in Su Friedrich's experimental narrative *Damned If You Don't.*

Courtesy filmmaker

Renee Tajima

Shalom Gorewitz had a daydream: "Ronald Reagan, inspired by the religious right, declared a Jubilee year for the U.S. In the Bible it says that every fiftieth year should be a Jubilee during which time land is left fallow, prisoners freed, debts cancelled.... In my dream this gesture carries throughout the world. The arms race is postponed, wars ended, and wage slavery is abolished. Reagan, fooling us for the final time, retires with dignity, having saved the world!" Gorewitz tells the dream on video in **A Small Jubilee**, in which images shot around New York City with a half-inch portapak and taken off-air are juxtaposed to form a subtext of promise/threat duality. Gorewitz also used an Amiga computer to create computer paintings and animations, and to control a new frame buffer built by David Jones at the Experimental TV Center in Owego, New York. *A Small Jubilee* premiered in WNET's *New Television* program and won first prize in the Film/Video Art category at the 1987 New Jersey Film and Video Festival. *A Small Jubilee*: Shalom Gorewitz, 310 W. 85th St., #7C, New York, NY 10024; (212) 724-2075.

Filmmaker Paul Gene Pizzuti and videomaker Noel Grimm have teamed up to create the 30-minute suspense video-movie **Once Upon a Nightmare**, shot on half-inch video last year in Ohio. Videographer Grimm used blue, pastel, and diffusion filters to create a dreamlike world on the edges of reality. The setting is the Pennsylvania countryside, where evil lurks in the idyllic surroundings. A woman named Delanna, preoccupied with daily life, is oblivious to warning signals and sets out on a short trip. Her car breaks down, and there seems to be a chance meeting with a strange, old character. Is it only coincidence that her boyfriend has left for a business trip during that same week? *Once Upon a Nightmare* stars Patricia Barker and Marge Buckley, with an original score composed by Michael Cox. *Once Upon a Nightmare*: Videosig, Attn: Julie Howmiller, 1030 E. Duane Ave., Ste. C, Sunnyvale, CA 94086; (408) 730-9291.

Independent producer Rachel Tanzer is seeking corporate sponsors for **Boston Beatmakers**, a made-for-television rockumentary about the Boston music scene. The program chronicles the careers of three Boston bands: til tuesday, the Del Fuegos, and the Outlets. All three local groups have gained national attention, raising the awareness of Boston as a cradle of contemporary music. While recounting the story of these bands, *Boston Beatmakers* will also trace the rock 'n' roll roots of the Boston music community. *Boston Beatmakers*: Rachel Tanzer, 6 Arbor Ct., Peabody, MA 01960; (617) 531-4931.

Three Bewildered People in the Night is writer-director Gregg Araki's no-budget, anti-Hollywood, 92-minute feature film about angst, despair, and coffee shops in the modern world. Shot on the run in the streets of Los Angeles with ultrafast 4X black and white stock, *Three Bewildered People* explores a dislocating bisexual triangle among three young artists: David, a gay performance artist; Alicia, his best friend and avant-garde videomaker; and Craig, Alicia's spiritually adrift boyfriend. In what Araki describes as "picturemaking as desperate as it gets," the production was shot in stark, minimalist style, "tracing the interconnected lives of the confused trio as they struggle through creative frustrations, emotional conflicts, and absurd existence in a Hostile, Meaningless Universe." *Three Bewildered People* won three prizes at the Festival Internazionale del Film in Locarno, Switzerland. *Three Bewildered People in the Night*: Desperate Pictures, 740 S. Detroit St., #1, Los Angeles, CA 90036; (213) 857-5963.

Producer C.L. Williams has completed the 30-minute video documentary, **Anatomy of a Champion**, chronicling the winning track and field teams of Overbrook High School in Philadelphia. Its athletes train in the hallways, on the streets, and, when they have an opportunity, on a borrowed athletic field, because Overbrook has never had a field of their own. Despite these conditions, the school has produced a number of world class athletes—like Wilt Chamberlain, Paul Jordan, Jason Grimes, and Rod Dixon—and has one of the greatest championship records in U.S. track and field history. In *Anatomy*, Williams follows two athletes who competed during the 1984 season, as Overbrook again attained recognition as a dominant force in national track and field competition. *Anatomy of a Champion*: C.L. Williams, 6150 Haverford Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19151; (215) 471-5659.

Filmmaker Su Friedrich has just completed **Damned If You Don't**, a 42-minute experimental narrative film. Shot in black and white, *Damned If You Don't* portrays a young nun fighting a losing battle against sexual desires that are suddenly awakened by the attention of a beautiful neighbor in narrative sequences shot without sound and accompanied at points by voiceover accounts of a woman's memories of schoolteachers who were nuns. The soundtrack also employs readings from testimony from the trial of a 17th century abbess accused of lesbian relations with another nun. And Friedrich also presents a condensed version of the film *Black Narcissus*, in which a nun is punished for her sexual desire. *Damned If You Don't*: for general inquiries, contact Su Friedrich, 102 Forsyth St., #17, New York, NY 10002; (212) 431-1399; for rentals, contact Women Make Movies, 225 Lafayette St., Rm. 212, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-0606 or Filmmaker's Cooperative, 175 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10016; (212) 889-3820.

Principal photograpy has been completed on **The Stupid Years**, a narrative short written and directed by Alyson Mead of Scratch Queen Productions. Shot in Los Angeles, New York, and New Hampshire, the story traces the decision of three college seniors to drop out of school in favor of a cross-country road trip. Their goal: California and a nationally syndicated game show. Throughout the film, the characters confront their fears of conformity in traditional jobs and struggle with political views when faced with patriotic values espoused in Reagan's America. Mead is currently seeking postproduction funding for the 60-minute film. *The Stupid Years*: Alyson Mead, 237 E. 5th St., #3, New York, NY 10003.

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The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy • Rent • Sell," "Freelancers" & "Postproduction" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$15 per issue.** Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear.

Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., January 8 for the March issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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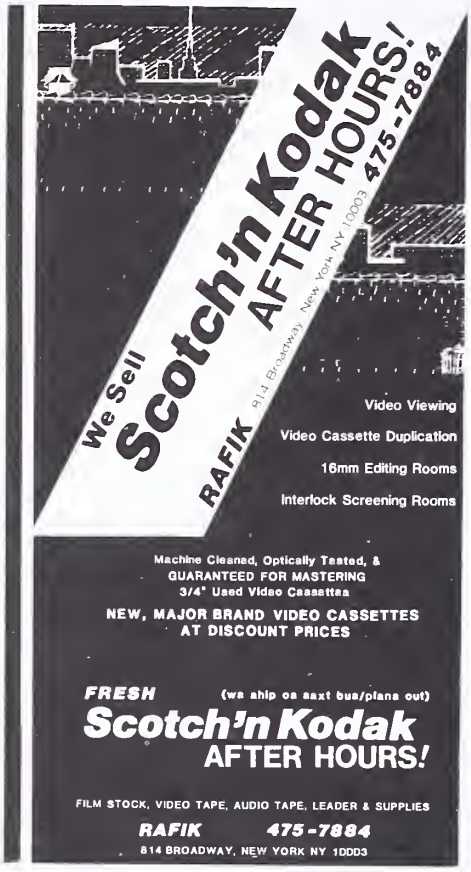
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HEALTH INSURANCE FOR AIVF MEMBERS

AIVF offers its members excellent group medical and life insurance plans, administered by The Entertainment Industry Group Insurance Trust (TEIGIT). Our comprehensive medical plan offers:

- $200 deductible
- 80% coinsurance
- yearly out-of-pocket cost set at $1,000 maximum & $1,000,000 maximum lifetime benefit

Other plans are available, including disability income insurance with a $500 monthly benefit.

To join AIVF or for more information, write AIVF Membership Services, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York NY 10012, or call Ethan Young, (212) 473-3400.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the Governor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., January 8 for the March issue. Send notices to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences • Workshops

BLACK FILMMAKERS FOUNDATION has launched monthly creative workshops for professional members of BFF. Offers opportunity to polish their respective crafts in a workshop setting on a regular basis. Each workshop performance will be videotaped for immediate playback to allow group discussion & critique of writing, direction & performances. Held monthly on Sats, free participation limited to BFF members. Contact: Donna Green, BFF Membership Coordinator; (212) 924-1198.

CENTER FOR NEW TELEVISION: Basic Video Production workshop, begins Dec. 7, Mondays & Wednesdays. Registration: CNTV, 912 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 427-5446.

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS: 6th annual nat'l conference, "This Way Up: Legal & Business Essentials for Nonprofits," to be held in NYC, Dec. 17. Topics incl. responsibilities of nonprofits as employers; borrowing money & finding insurance for nonprofits; nonprofit dissolution or merger & nonprofits as sponsors or umbrella groups. Registration: $75, must be paid before Nov. 20. Contact: Barry Slinker, VLA, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., New York, NY 10019; (212) 977-9270.

FILMMAKING WORKSHOPS offered by Collective for Living Cinema: Optical Printing taught by Bill Brand, Dec. 5, 6 & 8, tuition $110. Members receive discounts. Registration: Collective, 41 White St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 925-3926.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS MEDIA TRAINING: 16mm Sound Recording Techniques, Dec. 12 & 13, tuition $200, nonmembers add $10 processing fee; discount to $175 if registration paid by Nov. 25. Stand-by tuition discounts available. Contact: Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE: Computers for Production seminar, Dec. 12 & "Vietnam Revisited" series of screenings & discussions, Nov. 13-Dec. 11, at AFI Campus in LA. Contact: Public Service Programs; (213) 856-7690 or (800) 221-6248.

NEWARK MEDIAWORKS offering video production classes for beginning & intermediate video students: Production Unit Workshop: Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 28 or Dec. 5, 12, Jan. 2. For info & registration, contact: Dana Kenney; (201) 690-5474.

Films • Tapes Wanted

WOMEN OF COLOR FILM PROGRAM: Equal Media of London presenting tapes & films directed by women of color on U.K.'s Channel 4 beginning Nov. '88. Series will incl. shorts, docs, features, animation & experimental works on 16mm, 35mm, or video; directed & preferably produced by women for theatrical, TV, or community distribution. Contact: Parmindir Vir, Equal Media Ltd., 1 Wakeman Rd., Kensal Rise, London NW10 5BJ, U.K.; 01-960-6876.

ASIAN AMERICAN FILMS: Film News Now Foundation & Equal Media (London) seek new films by Asian Amer. producers for a special showcase to be held April, '88, at the prestigious National Film Theatre in London. All lengths & genres accepted. Please send 16mm print, 3/4" or VHS for screening along w/ background info to: Quynh Thai, Film News, 335 W. 38th St., 5th fl., New York, NY 10018; (212) 971-6061.

CAGE Video Project seeks tapes for '87-'88 programming yr. Will present collection of exhibitions that group artists by discipline, form, or subject matter. Submissions accepted Sept.-June '88. Send tapes & SASE to: Cincinnati Artists Group Effort, Box 1362, Cincinnati, OH 45201.

NAATA seeks new film & video works for public television series, *Silk Screen*. Documentary, dramatic, animation, experimental & performance works on 3/4", 1", 16mm & 35mm considered. For guidelines & submission forms, contact: Janice Sakamoto, National Asian American Telecommunications Association, 356 Ninth St., 2nd floor, San Francisco, CA 94103.

ALIVE FROM OFF CENTER: Nat'l PBS series showcasing new works fusing performing arts w/ TV technologies, will preview work for its summer '88 season. Submissions accepted through Dec. '87 & final decisions made by Feb. '88. Send tapes, max. 30-mins on 3/4" or VHS, w/ SASE to: Alive from Off Center, KTCA-TV, 1640 Como Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108.

THE LEARNING CHANNEL's Spring '88 season of *The Independents* series will showcase films & tapes addressing issues related to aging. Nonfiction, narrative, experimental & animation are welcome. Themes include: Images & Perceptions, the Aging Body, Memories & Older Expressions. Programs not broadcast in last five years given priority. Contact: Aging Series, Roberta Grossman, 641 N. Poinsettia Pl., L.A., CA 90035; (213) 934-6507.

Opportunities • Gigs

1988 INDEPENDENT SPIRIT AWARDS: Member of Independent Feature Project/West are urged to nominate candidates for Independent Spirit Awards cats: best ind feature film, best 1st feature, best actor, best actress, best director, best screenplay, best cinematography & special distinction for foreign producers or coproduc-

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Formore information, write: Ethan Young, Membership Services, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

MOVING? LET US KNOW.

It takes four to six weeks to process an address change, so please notify us in advance.

The FIVF Festival Bureau has established a tape library of members' current works to expedite screenings for upcoming film and video festivals. Members interested in depositing their work in the library should contact: Kathryn Bowser, Festival Bureau director, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. 1/2" and 3/4" tapes will be accepted.

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tion. All nominees must have been involved in a 1987 theatrical release in L.A. for at least 1 wk prior to Dec. 31, '87; all films must have r.t. of no less than 70-mins; no film financed or produced by an established major motion picture division of a studio (although acquisitions may be nominated). Send suggestions to Carole Markin, IFP/West, 309 Santa Monica Blvd., Ste. 422, Santa Monica, CA 90401.

ASST. PROFESSOR IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS: Univ. of Wisconsin at Madison seeks appointment of a tenure-track asst. professor beginning w/ '88-'89 academic year in the area of video production. Persons w/ broad-based competencies in theory & practice of video prod. &/or special interest in prod & study of documentary esp. encouraged to apply. Send inquiries & appls (incl. vita, 3 letters of reference & examples of scholarly work) by Jan. 18, '88 to Joseph Cappella, Dept. of Communication Arts, 6110 Vilas Hall, Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53706.

ASSISTANT OR ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR to teach production & screenwriting, incl single camera film/video prod & TV studio techniques. Terminal degree & strong background in prod, writing & teaching required. Send vita & letter of appl. to: David Appleby, Search Committee Chair, Dept. of Theatre & Communication Arts, Memphis State University, Memphis, TN 38152.

MEDIA ARTS DIVISION seeks full-time assistant or associate professor to teach video, plus one or more courses in studio lighting, sound, computer graphics, or film. Candidates should be able to work w/ studio & field production in 3/4" & 1/2", w/ electronic editing & be able to address theoretical & critical issues in studio courses. MFA or equiv. plus 2 yrs full-time teaching exp. required. Deadline: February 1. Send letter of appl., resumé, statement of teaching philosophy, examples of work & 3 references to: Linda Gammel, Media Arts Division, Minneapolis College of Art & Design, 133 E. 25th St., Minneapolis, MN 55404.

ARTISTS RESIDENCY program at the Experimental Television Center provides 5-day intensive program on techniques of image processing. Prior experience in video production required. Send resumé, project description indicating how image processing will be integrated & preferred 5-day periods during Feb-June '88. First-time applicants also required to send sample work on 3/4" or VHS. Deadline: December 18. Experimental Television Center, 180 Front St., Owego, NY 13827; (607) 687-1423.

NEWTON TELEVISION FOUNDATION is soliciting proposals from independent producers for docs on issues of public concern. Contact: Newton TV Foundation, 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477.

Publications • Software

GREEN GEMS: 40-page guide to films & tapes on environmental & energy issues, published by Media Network & Environmental Action, now available. Topics incl. water & land use, toxics, nuclear power & weapons, appropriate tech., energy alternatives & community organizing. Over 70 titles listed w/ evaluative descriptions, length, format, producer, price & distributor. Also incl. section on how to plan successful screenings & resource list. Price: $11.50 for institutions, $6.50 for individuals. Media Network, 121 Fulton St., 5th fl., New York, NY 10038.

PHILANTHROPY IN ACTION: new publication that illustrates the achievements of philanthropic grants from foundations, corporations, individuals, religious groups & coop benevolence assoc. Now available from the Foundation Center, $24.95, cloth; $19.95 paper. Also available, the new '87 edition of Grants for Film, Media & Communications, incl. lists of grants to nonprofits for films, docs, audiovisuals, journalism, radio & TV, communications tech., & publications. $38.00. The Foundation Center, 79 5th Ave., Dept. EX, New York, NY 10003; (800) 424-9836.

Resources • Funds

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS: Arts Adm. Fellows Program encompasses 13 wks at NEA's Washington, DC offices to become acquainted w/ the policies & operations of the agency & gain a nat'l overview of arts activities. Deadline: Jan. 8, '88. Contact: Arts Adm. Fellows Program. NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Next deadline for humanities projects in the media: March 18, '88. Contact: James Dougherty, NEH, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 786-0378.

CHECKERBOARD FOUNDATION isaccepting applications for its 1987/88 video awards in postproduction. Two to four awards of $5,000-$10,000 will be made. Deadline: March 31. For applications, write: Checkerboard Foundation, Box 222, Ansonia Station, New York, NY 100233.

APPARATUS PRODUCTIONS, a nonprofit organization, seeks scripts for short experimental narrative films planned for prod. in spring, 1988. Deadline: Jan. 15. For appl. send SASE to 225 Lafayette St., Rm. 507, New York, NY 10012.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COUNCIL: Grants in Aid Program for Professional Discipline/Individual Artists application deadline: Jan. 15, '88; Contact: SCAC, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; 734-8696.

NEW YORK STATE FILM EXHIBITION PROGRAM grants available from the Film Bureau. Offered to nonprofit organizations in NYS for film screenings of ind. works or films not ordinarily available to the public. Matching funds of up to $300 are available for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Film Bureau, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

NEW YORK WOMEN IN FILM's Job Bank provides resumés of professionals in all areas of film & TV industry, incl. writers, producers, directors, business affairs personnel & technicians. Free service. Contact: Maria Nation, coordinator, New York Women in Film Job Bank; (212) 541-6243.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING's Open Solicitation deadlines for FY '88: Jan. 8 & April 22, '88. Proposals for Elementary/Secondary Education Tele-

vision Series due in CPB's Office of Education on Dec. 18, 1987 (profit & nonprofit groups & institutions may apply). For applications, contact: CPB, 1111 16th St NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 955-5100.

HARVESTWORKS: Artists-in-Residence program for artists working w/ audio as creative medium. Residency offers studio prod. time to complete a new work at Studio PASS, incl studio redesigned w/ 10' x 15' "live" recording room, new mixing console, 24 in & 8 out & 1/2" 8-trk to Macintosh computer synchronization. Artists will receive 20 to 40 hrs of access to studio, full-time engineer, tape & other materials. Radio projects welcome. Artists in audio, film, dance, video, radio, music, theater & performance art encouraged to apply, regardless of technical skills. Deadline: Jan. 8, '88. Contact: Debbie McBride, Harvestworks, AIR Program, 596 Broadway, #602, New York, NY 10012; (212) 431-1130.

REAL ART WAYS Audio & Video Access Center available to ind. producers. Multi-track recording studio & 3/4" shooting & editing video facility. Subsidies offered for portion of user cost. Consultation, production & technical assistance also provided. Contact: Marty Fegy, technical director or Victor Velt, video curator. Real Art Ways, 94 Allyn St., Hartford, CT, 06103-1402.

Trims & Glitches

CONGRATS to Emmy Award winners: AIVF members Greta Schiller & Robbie Rosenberg for Individual Achievements in News & Documentary Programming, *Before Stonewall:* Sharon Sopher, director, *Witness to Apartheid*; & Robert Gardner, director, *Courage to Care*.

KUDOS to recipients of production grants from the New York Council for the Humanities: Barbara Kopple, *The Cutting Edge: Plant Closings in the American Workplace*.; Sue Williams, *China in Revolution*; Julia Keydel, *Refractions/Reflections: A Documentary About Homelessnes & Social Stigma*, Helen Whitney & Jane Barnes, *Willa Cather: The Road Home*.

KUDOS to recipients of New York City film & video production grants from the Jerome Foundation: David Blair, Olivia Carrescia, Vanalyne Green, Joan Braderman, Ken Feingold & Maureen Selwood.

CENTER FOR NEW TELEVISION has moved to a new facility in the rapidly developing south Loop area of Chicago, complete w/ new A/B roll edit suite w/ list management, slow motion, freeze frames & broadcast quality decks at 912 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 427-5446.

UCVIDEO has changed its name to Intermedia Arts of Minnesota.

KUDOS to Amy Kravitz, recipient of a production grant from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts.

CONGRATS to Ann Mundy, who was awarded a script-writing grant from the NEH for a historical documentary on a famous northern California Indian, Ishi.

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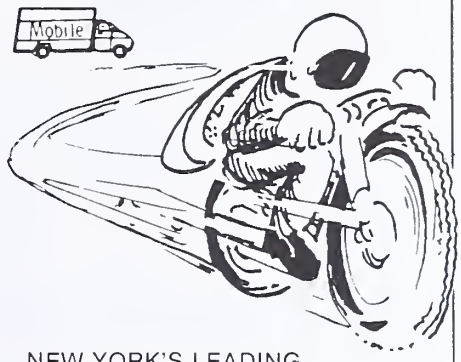
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SUMMARY OF THE AIVF/FIVF MINUTES

The board of directors of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met on September 18, 1987.

The board reconstituted the following committees: Membership (expanding membership; improving and developing member services), Development (fundraising strategies; nomination of new FIVF board members; review of program priorities), Advocacy (developing positions and organizing around media policy issues).

In addition, the board agreed to reimburse out-of-town board members for lodging, up to $55 per night, as well as for transportation to and from board meetings. In a related matter, the board agreed to hold future meetings on Saturdays, with committees meeting the preceding Friday afternoon and evening. No other actions were taken due to lack of a quorum.

Advocacy committee chair Robert Richter reported that fundraising for AIVF's public broadcasting education and legislative campaign has been overwhelmingly successful, with members sending over $6,000. In addition, FIVF received a $7,500 grant from the Benton Foundation for an educational campaign surrounding the status of independents on public broadcasting.

Newly-elected AIVF board member Adrianne Benton reported that FIVF's Donor-Advised Film and Video Fund successfully completed its first cycle, distributing $40,000 to film and video projects dealing with peace and environmental issues. This year FIVF is launching an effort to encourage additional foundations to participate in the fund. An additional $10,000 has already been committed.

Executive director Lawrence Sapadin reported that discussions are underway to hold AIVF's 1988 Indie Awards at the American Museum of the Moving Image. Editor Martha Gever and managing editor Pat Thomson reported that many reader surveys inserted in a recent issue of *The Independent* have been returned and will help us increase national advertising. Kathryn Bowser, festival bureau director, announced that a new edition of the *AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals* is being planned for a winter 1987/88 publication. Seminar director Ethan Young reported that future seminars will be recorded professionally and audio cassettes will be marketed to the national membership. On the subject of finances, business manager Morton Marks reported that AIVF has been approved for charge card sales, enabling people to join AIVF, and to renew membership or buy books using a charge card over the phone.

Future board meetings have been rescheduled for December 12, 1987, March 19, 1988, and June 18, 1988. **Meetings are open to the public and members are encouraged to attend. Phone for details and to confirm date, time, and place before a meeting.**

AIVF members are encouraged to participate in committees. If you are interested in helping expand membership services, working on the Indie Awards and other development projects, or getting involved with advocacy, write to Acting board chair Robert Richter, c/o AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, or phone executive director Lawrence Sapadin at the AIVF offices for more information, (212) 473-3400.

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AN AIVF SEMINAR ON AUDIOCASSETTE

A panel discussion on international festivals and trends in overseas marketing options for independents, held on September 30, 1987

GUIDO CHIESA *US representative, Turin International Youth Film Festival*

JANET GRILLO *Director of Acquisitions, New Line Cinema*

GORDON HITCHENS *US representative, Berlin International Film Festival and Nyon Documentary Film Festival*

JOANNE KOCH *Executive Director, New York Film Festival*

JOY PERETHS *VP International for Sales and Acquisitions, International Film Exchange*

KATHRYN BOWSER *Director, FIVF Festival Bureau*

...AND YOU ARE THERE

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AIVF Publications, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York NY 10012

ADVOCACY ADDITIONS

Contributions to the Emergency Legislative Fund have continued to flow into AIVF since a letter requesting support was sent to our membership in September. The fund was established to help subsidize a campaign to secure public television reforms and to establish a National Independent Program Service that will guarantee funding, promotion, and distribution of independent film and video. Those wishing to make contributions should send checks, payable to AIVF/Emergency Legislative Fund, to: AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

We wish to thanks the following individuals and organizations for their contributions:

Robert Achs, Skip Blumberg, Steven Borns, Arthur Boudine, Stephen Bretschneider, Myrna Changar, Marianne Connor, David Crocker, Tom Davenport, Matt Dibble, Virginia Durrin, Deirdre Fishel, Sheila Fortune, Lucinda B. Furlong, Julianne Gilliam, Susan L. Goldbetter, Michal Goldman, Paula Gordon, Judith Guskin, Rhyena Halpern, Robby Hanson, Catherine Harrington, Tom Hayes, Sally Heckel, Francisco Hirata, M. Kacir, Manfred Kirchheimer, Bill Jersey, Tom Johnson, Kathleen Johnston, Joseph Kelly, Dan Klugherz, Andrew Kolker, Jan Krawitz, Linda La-Pierre, David Larsen, Marjorie Leopold, Roy Lekus, Mary Ann Lynch, Bienvenida Matias, Peter Mitchell, Craig Moncho, Sally Moore, Robert Mugge, Steven Murphy, Sarah D. O'Brien, Outsider Productions, Polly Pettit, Frances Reid, Rosemary Ritvo, Allen Ross, David Royle, Sol Rubin, Carlyn Saltman, Bill Shepherd, Sam Sills, Helena Solberg Ladd, Ross Spears, Robert Spencer, Sara Stuart, Tapper Productions, Joan Williams, Dan Woodard, Warren Young, and John Zieman.

Additional contributions have also made to the AIVF/National Coalition Fund, established for the same purpose, from Women Make Movies, Media Alliance, Intermedia Arts of Minnesota, and Jack Levine. Further donations are welcome, and can be sent to the address above.

TAPE DONATIONS

FIVF would like to thank Camera 3 Productions and Marcia Ely for their individual donations of videotape stock, which was subsequently distributed to members of AIVF free of charge.

LIFE INSURANCE CANCELLATION

The new life insurance plan for AIVF members that was announced in the November issue of *The Independent* has subsequently been dropped by the administering company, The Entertainment Industry Group Insurance Trust (TEIGIT). We regret any inconvenience this cancellation might have caused. Members can still receive life insurance covergae through TEIGIT's major medical and comprehensive medical plans

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